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OPTION: LINGUISTICS

Students' Attitudes towards The Role of Mobile Dictionaries in Facilitating Reading Comprehension.

The Case of Master One Students at the Department of Letters and English Language,

University of 8 Mai 1945 / Guelma.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate

This work:

To my beloved parents

To my lovely brothers and sisters

To my little sweet nephew "Adam Zine Eddine"

To my dear relatives "Nacira", "Youcef", and "Chorfi"

To my lovely brothers' wives

To my closest friends

and to

you

Amira

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

Foreign language learners tend to utilize any possible means during the reading process to obtain more information, learn more vocabulary, and more importantly, comprehend the reading material at hand easily and effectively. The present study seeks to recognize the attitudes that EFL learners hold towards the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension. To this end, the research adopts the descriptive method that includes quantitative and qualitative tools. Both a structured questionnaire and classroom observation designed to gather the needed data. The questionnaire was directed to Master One students (N=100), at the Department of English, University of 8 mai 1945, Guelma. The compiled data confirm the main hypothesis, which implies that EFL students have positive attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension. Hence, the research advocates the use of mobile dictionaries as supplementary tools to overcome students' reading comprehension difficulties at the level of ambiguous and unknown words. Finally, some implications are suggested for conducting further studies.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Mobile Dictionaries, EFL learners.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

App: Application

BL: Bilingual Dictionary

BL: Blended Learning

CD: Compact Disk

DMA: Direct Memory Access

ED: Electronic Dictionary

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

ICT: Information Communication Technology

LCD: Liquid Crystal Display

MD: Monolingual Dictionary

MLD: Monolingual Learners' Dictionary

PC: Personal Computer

PDA: Personal Digital Assistant

PED: Pocket Electronic Dictionary

RAM: Random Access Memory

SL: Second Language

SMD: Standard Monolingual Dictionaries

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, no one can deny the fact that English is one of the most successful ways of international communication since it is the common language that people of different nations in the world use to communicate. For this reason, learning English as a second and/or foreign language (SL/FL) becomes an important thing that millions of people all over the world are trying to achieve. In doing so, they need first to develop the four basic language skills, so that they can master English effectively and communicatively.

Reading as a skill plays a crucial role in the development of the language proficiency; whereby students fulfill their academic activities and obtain plenty of information which can enlarge their knowledge. In language learning context, comprehension is regarded as the substantial aim of the reading process; yet, achieving this aim is not as easy as it seems. It is rather a challenging issue, because students are not only expected to read passages and texts in the right spelling and pronunciation, but also to find out the meaning of words within a text in order to gain an overall understanding of what is being read.

Traditionally, students get the meaning of unknown words through the use of traditional dictionaries. However, the emergence of new technological devices (tablet computers, ipads, and smart phones) has led to radical changes in both teaching and learning, especially in foreign language context. The smart phone is one of the most accessible technological devices that almost all students possess and use in their learning nowadays. Like many other devices, the smart phone contains a wide variety of applications including dictionaries from which the user can learn the meaning of the word in many languages. Therefore, the focus of this research is to highlight the important role that mobile dictionaries play in learning foreign languages in general and facilitating reading comprehension in particular.

1. Statement of the Problem

The role of reading is important in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Reading is one of the four basic skills that EFL learners need to develop in order to master the language. In spite of the reading importance, many of EFL learners, particularly Algerian learners−who had studied English at least for seven years before applying for University studies − do not give it much attention and they have many problems with this skill. Comprehension which is the main aim behind reading, appears to be the major problem that learners may face in the reading process.

Bearing in mind that, reading in EFL is not the same as reading in the first language, when learners read in their first language, they do not face too much difficulty in understanding what they read; since they are familiar with vocabularies of their first language. However, when it comes to reading in English, EFL learners in general and Master One students at the Department of English, University of Guelma in particular, find it difficult to understand some terms in the texts provided by their teachers of advanced reading strategies module. Adding to that, when Master One students read different sources to do their activities in and out of the classroom, they encounter difficult words which may impede their reading comprehension. Hence, Master One students are in need for a support that can help them in discovering the meaning of unknown words easily and rapidly to overcome the aforementioned obstacle.

2. Aims of the Research

The general aim of this study is to explore the perceptions, views, and attitudes of EFL learners towards the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension. However, this general aim is divided into two specific aims:

- To identify EFL learners attitudes' towards the use of mobile dictionaries in English

language learning ; and

- To highlight the importance of mobile dictionaries in learning English as a foreign language.

3. Research Questions

In the light of the aforementioned research aims, the following questions have been designed to direct the study:

- What perceptions, views, and attitudes do EFL learners express towards the use of mobile dictionaries in learning EFL?

- What perceptions, views, and attitudes do EFL learners express towards the use of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension?

- To what extent does the use of mobile dictionaries as supplementary tools facilitate EFL students' reading comprehension?

4. Research Hypotheses

In order to conduct the present study that aims at exploring students' attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension, it is hypothesized that:

H_1: "EFL students may have positive attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension".

H_0: "EFL students may have negative attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension".

5. Research Methodology and Design

a. Research Method and Data Gathering Tools

In order to test the hypothesis stated previously, this research makes use of quantitative- descriptive method; that comprises two different data gathering tools. The first

tool is a students' questionnaire which provides a comprehensive picture of subject matter; while the second one is an indirect classroom observation involving the attendance of some sessions of advanced reading strategies module with Master One EFL students during the first semester.

b. Population of the Study

This research targets the population of Master One students at the Departement of Letters and English Language, at the University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. Since it is difficult to deal with the entire number of population of different age and gender, the sample of one hundred (100) EFL students is randomly selected. The targeted population is chosen intentionally on the basis that this level suits better this study, where students study advanced reading strategies as an independent module in two forms, theoretically and practically for a whole semester. Furthermore, Master One students have assignments in which they present almost a whole lecture orally, so they have to read different sources to abtain information needed for their presentations.

6. Structure of the Research

This research comprises three main chapters, in addition to the general introduction and the general conclusion. The first and the second chapters provides the theoretical framework of the research; whereas, the third chapter is completely analytical.

The first chapter is devoted to cover the definition of reading, its importance, its types and its purpose. More importantly, it tackles the definition of reading comprehension, its levels, its difficulties, its strategies, and the role of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension. It concludes with the findings of previous studies concerning the relationship between the use of these strategies and reading comprehension performance. The second chapter deals with mobile dictionaries. It is composed of two sections. The first one

discusses the notion of mobile learning including its definition, characteristics, and mobile applications. The second section is allocated to tackle the concept of dictionaries, electronic dictionaries, and mobile dictionaries in particular. Therefore, it presents the definition of mobile dictionaries, its characteristics, and the best mobile dictionary applications for English language learners.

The third chapter is the field of investigation that provides a detailed analysis of the two research tools used to conduct the study, along with the results, the analysis, and the interpretation of the findings. It concludes with a set of pedagogical implications and some recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical Perspective on Reading Comprehension

CONTENTS

Introduction

One important skill without which the learning process can never stand is reading. Reading is a significant tool that helps learners gain access to the FL. In light of this idea, this chapter is an attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of both reading and reading comprehension. It starts with some different researchers' views regarding the nature of reading in addition to its importance, purpose, and types. It also covers the different definitions of the notion of comprehension in isolation for better understanding of reading comprehension. Then, it tackles the different levels of comprehension, difficulties that learners encounter while reading for comprehension, and the role of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension. It concludes with effective strategies for improving reading comprehension and what previous studies found concerning the relationship between the use of these strategies and reading comprehension performance.

1.1. Definition of Reading

Given that reading is an important language skill, many linguists and researchers attempted to define it. However, there is no consensus regarding the nature of reading. Each researcher provided a definition for reading according to his own perspective. Alderson (2000, p. 1) believed that it is infeasible to find a comprehensive overview of reading. This lack of unanimity led to prevalence of uncounted reading definitions in the literature. Such definitions can stretch from reading being simply the ability "to make sense of written or printed symbols" (Fischer, 2003, p. 11), to reading being a:

> Complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text.
>
> (Pang, Muaka, Bernbardt, & Kamil, 2003, p. 6)

In view to this definition, reading is more than sounding words. It is a mental process that requires readers to think about what they are reading to derive meanings. But how do readers derive such meanings? Lin (2010, p. 125) believed it is through interaction with the text directly and with the writer indirectly. Along similar lines, Grabe and Stoller (2011) stated that "Reading is the ability to draw meanings from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately" (p. 3). This indicates that readers' aim is to be able to decode messages within the text, and to understand it correctly.

Additionally, Oakhill, Cain, and Elbro (2015) indicated that reading is a combination of two major components (Figure 1.1), "*word reading …* refers to the ability to read single words out of context. *Language comprehension* refers to our ability to understand words, sentences, and text" (p. 2). According to them (p. 3), reading ability equates word reading multiplied by language comprehension (R=WR×LC). Consequently, if one of the two components equals zero, reading ability will be zero. In this sense, Oakhill et al. shared with Pang et al. (2003) the idea that reading is a result of employing various skills and abilities.

What is noticeable there is that all previous definitions agree on one point that reading is not merely a matter of passive reception of data from written texts, but rather an active construction and unique interpretation that is differ from one reader to another.
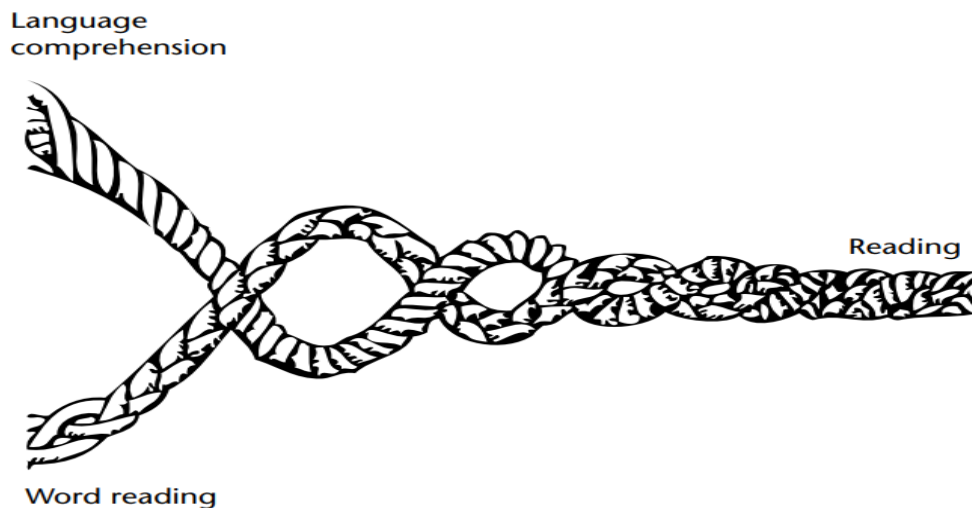
Figure 1.1. Skilled Reading (Scarborough, 2001, as cited in Oakhill et al., 2015, p. 3).

1.2. The Importance of Reading

It has been approved that reading is a significant skill in learning English language (McDonough, Shaw, & Masuhara, 2013, p.110). It is widely said that reading is so important skill that learners have to develop, but the question is why it is so? Mikuleckey and Jeffries (1996, p. 1) believed that reading is important because it is the way which assists students in developing their general language skills. They further illustrated the significant role of reading and how it helps English learners as follows:

- Reading helps learners learn to think in English;

- It can enlarge learners' English vocabulary;

- It can help learners improve their writing;

- Reading may be a good way for learners who live in non-English-speaking country to practice their English;

- It can help learners prepare for study in an English-speaking country; and

- Reading is a good way to find out about new ideas, facts, and experiences (Mikuleckey & Jeffries, 1996, p. 1).

In addition to the obvious fact that reading is the window to the world through which students acquire new knowledge; it is also a key element in improving other language skills such as writing. When students read, they acquire new vocabularies and encounter different writers' style as a result. So we can say that, the more students read, the more they can write. Furthermore, through reading, readers can learn about the culture, civilization, and literature of others.

1.3. Purpose of Reading

There is no doubt that reading is an activity wherein people read differently on different texts and for different purposes. It is also quite clear that the latter may vary from one reader to another according to his/her needs. Some readers may read to fulfill their educational purposes, or to acquire new knowledge; while some other readers may read for their personal purposes. In this respect, Harmer (2001, p. 200) divided reasons for reading into two main categories, instrumental and pleasurable. The first category means that people consciously intend to read when they want to attain clear and utilitarian goals existing in their mind. For instance, people read road signs to determine their destination, or they read the instructions on the television ticket so that they know how to operate it. Whereas, the second one implies a reading primarily for pleasure and enjoyment. For example reading puzzles, stories, or novels.

In contrast, some other studies showed that readers unconsciously set their purposes before reading. To support this, Grabe and Stoller (2002) stated, "When we begin to read, we actually have a number of initial decisions to make, and we usually make these decisions very quickly, almost unconsciously in most cases" (p. 5). Accordingly, it can be said that almost all readers read for specific and different purposes, which can be made consciously or unconsciously. It is also worth noting that reading purposes which readers made before reading activities are important and helpful in organizing and facilitating the way they read

since these purposes make readers aware about their needs from reading a particular text. For that, Grabe and Stoller (2011, p. 6) classified the purposes of reading under seven main points. Namely, reading for searching about simple information, for skimming the text quickly to gain general understanding, for learning from texts, for integrating information, for writing because the more students read the better they write, or for criticizing texts. While reading for general comprehension is saved for last because it is considered the main aim for reading.

1.4. Types of Reading

In order to achieve one of the above-mentioned reading purposes, readers have to adapt one sort of reading that should be the most appropriate one in serving their needs i.e., the type of reading that readers select varies according to the designed purpose behind their reading activity. Generally speaking, reading mainly divides into two types: extensive reading and intensive reading.

1.4.1. Extensive Reading

It is a sort of reading which students often do away from the classroom, for example, reading books, novels, newspapers. Long and Richards (1987) identified extensive reading as an activity that "occurring when students read large amounts of high interest material, usually out of class, concentrating on meaning, 'reading for gist' and skipping unknown words" (p. 216). On this turn, extensive reading refers to the quantity of reading where students read as much as they can and whatever they want with more focus on the meaning of the entire text than on its specific details, because readers' main reason behind reading extensively is to attain an overall understanding of that text generally for their own pleasure (Harmer, 2001, p. 210).

Similarly, Carrell and Carson (1997, pp. 49-50) described extensive reading as a rapid activity, since readers' aim is to grasp the main idea of the text which suits their level without

paying attention to its specific parts. In this context, Harmer (2001, p. 210) pinpointed the reading materials as an essential condition of a successful extensive reading, wherein students should read only what they can understand otherwise their reading for pleasure will not be easily realized. For that reason, reading extensively usually requires that a student know 98 to 99 percent of the words within the text (Grabe, 2009, p. 311).

1.4.2. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading, on the other hand, is what Brown (2007) mentioned, "A classroom-oriented activity in which students focus on the linguistic or semantic details of a passage. Intensive reading calls students' attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning" (p. 366). Clearly, then, reading intensively which is usually done within the classroom under the teacher supervision requires more attention and concentration for every single point in order to get a deeper understanding of the text.

In the same line of thought, Wang (2011, p. 93) identified intensive reading as a slow and careful activity, because students do not read to attain a general understanding of the text, but rather to focus on its every detail for better understanding. That is why its slow speed may give the reader a chance to stop his/her reading and check up the dictionary whenever difficult words come across. Therefore, this sort of reading is useful for students especially for those who learn English as a SL/FL. Through intensive reading, students develop their reading skills and acquire more vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002, p. 296).

In light of the aforementioned ideas, Verma (2015, pp. 302-303) summarized all what have been mentioned about the two kinds of reading (extensive and intensive) in these characteristics.

Table 1.1

Characteristics of Extensive and Intensive Reading

Extensive reading	Intensive reading
Reading is individual and silent.	It is usually classroom based.
The purposes of reading are usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding.	Aims at building more language knowledge rather than simply practice the skill of reading.
Reading is its own reward.	Reader is intensely involved in looking inside the text.
Reading materials are well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar.	Readers focus on linguistic or semantic details of a reading.
Reading speed is usually faster than slower.	Readers focus on the surface structure details such as grammar
	Readers identify key vocabulary.
	Readers may draw pictures to aid them (such as in problem solving).
	Texts are read carefully and thoroughly, again and again.

In brief, extensive reading is generally non-academic reading where readers are free in choosing the text, the place, and the time they want. Whereas, intensive reading is usually a classroom activity wherein students read texts their teacher gives, with more emphasis on its specific details.

1.5. Reading Comprehension

In order to understand what the concept of reading comprehension as a whole means, it is needed first to identify the notion of comprehension in isolation for better understanding.

1.5.1. Definition of Comprehension

Almost all reading specialists and researchers agreed on the same general definition of comprehension which stands for the process of constructing meaning from connected texts (Brassell & Rasinski, 2008; McNamara, 2007; Pang et al., 2003). To put it another way, comprehension is narrowly described by Pearson (1978) as "invoking the *new* to *known* principle" (p. 11). Meaning that, during the reading activity the reader relates the knowledge s/he grasps from the new context to what s/he is already acquired to reach a successful understanding of what is being read. This is exactly what Koda (2004) affirmed in his words, "Comprehension occurs when the reader extracts and integrates various information from the text and combines it with what is already known" (p. 4). Therefore, comprehension is not a passive process; however, it is an active one, in which the reader actively involves within the text to understand it via using his prior knowledge (Pang et al., 2003, p. 14). The previous discussed ideas highlight the strong and important relationship that exists between comprehension and reader's prior knowledge since the former attains with the integration of the latter.

1.5.2. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension, in its most obvious sense, is the ability to understand what is being read. Going beyond, Woolley (2011, p. 15) viewed reading comprehension as a process in which readers make meaning from text to attain a general understanding of what is read rather than getting meaning from isolated words and sentences. So, it is obviously recognized that reading comprehension involves the overall understanding of texts with paying less attention to the meaning of individual words. A similar view was given by Flores, Moran, and Orzo (2004, p. 3) who defined reading comprehension as a mind's capacity in understanding ideas described in the text, on the one hand, and the message and purpose that the writer wants to convey, on the other. Meaning that reading comprehension is an activity that requires

a good reader, who does not focus just on the surface level, but going further to reach a deeper understanding.

Besides that, Brassell and Rasinski (2008) argued that "reading comprehension is the ability to take information from written text and do something in a way that demonstrates knowledge or understanding of that information" (p. 18). Based on this definition, it can be realized that reading comprehension occurs only when readers have the ability to act and react with what they are reading to demonstrate their comprehension. The researchers provided different examples to illustrate how readers can show their understanding of what they read. For instance, when a reader is able to engage in an intelligent debate about the content of a reading text with other people, this demonstrates his understanding of the text. Likewise, when a reader is able to link some parts of the text he is reading with other real incidents, doubtless, the reader is proving comprehension of that text (Brassell & Rasinski, 2008, p. 18).

Additionally, Snow (2002, p. 11) identified reading comprehension as a process in which readers simultaneously extract and construct meanings via interacting and engaging with the text. This proposed definition reveals that reading comprehension is a way wherein the reader creates meaning for the text s/he reads, at the same time, a source through which the reader builds his knowledge. In Snow's view, reading comprehension entails three dimensions, the reader, the text and the activity. These elements mainly exist within a larger socio-cultural context (Figure 1.2). The first element (the reader) refers to all abilities, experiences and knowledge individuals bring when reading. While, the second one (the text) is the material that is to be read regardless of its nature, printed or electronic. In considering the activity, three points should be included, the designed purposes behind reading, the processes that readers engage in their reading, and the consequences that readers reach at the end of their reading (Snow, 2002, p. 11).
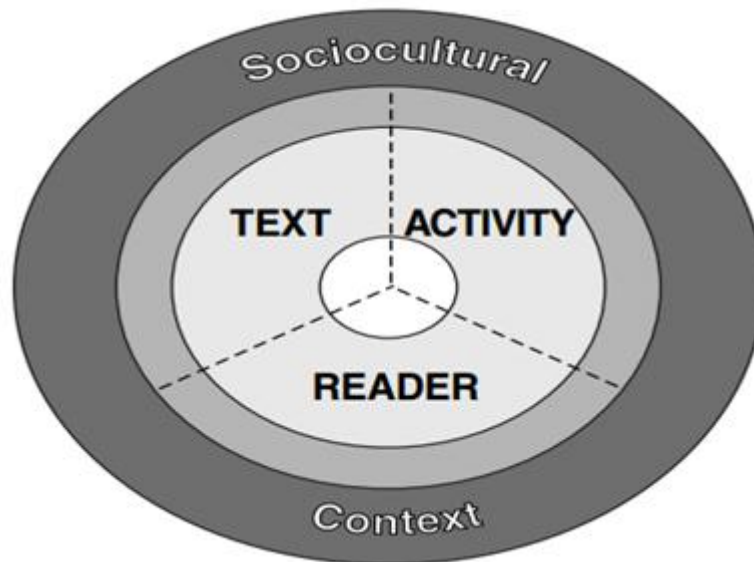
Figure 1.2. A Heuristic for Thinking about Reading Comprehension

(Snow, 2002, p. 12).

Based on what has been said above, reading comprehension with no doubt is a complex process that involves an interaction between the reader and the text within a particular context; wherein the former understands the meaning and acquires knowledge from reading materials. Equally important, reading comprehension requires a good reader who uses different capacities and abilities that enables him/her to demonstrate his/her comprehension and reach his/her intended goals.

1.6. Levels of Reading Comprehension

It is important to note that comprehension process is not that simple in sense of decoding symbols and extracting data from texts. Rather, it is a sophisticated and multidimensional process that requires a close interaction between the text, the author, and the reader because it is said that reading comprehension functions gradually at three different levels of complexity (Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney, 2010, p. 278).

First, literal comprehension or reading the lines is regarded to be the first and the lowest level of comprehension in reading. Manzo and Manzo (1993) defined reading the lines

as "the process of decoding the words in order to reconstruct the author's *basic* message" (p. 5). At this level of comprehension, the reader is able to identify the basic information or as Westwood (2008) mentioned, "Factual information" (p. 32), that are directly presented in the text. Knowing the name of the major characters—at least the protagonist and the antagonist—and knowing the setting–where and when—the story or text takes place are clear examples of literal comprehension. Consequently, as compared to the other levels of comprehension, literal comprehension is considered the simpler one (Alderson, 2000, p. 8).

Second, inferential comprehension or reading between the lines is what Manzo and Manzo (1993, p. 5) stated, "The process of making inferences in order to reconstruct the author's *implied* messages". Clearly, then, inferential comprehension is more complicated than literal comprehension because it requires the reader to go beyond what is explicitly stated in the text to figure out other details in order to deduce the hidden messages that the author wants to convey. For example, the reader can understand the feelings of the characters from their speeches and actions. Furthermore, at this level, the reader may use various strategies, like drawing conclusions or making predictions of what may come next (Bobrow et al., 2006, p. 276). For instance, the reader can predict the results or the end of the story before finishing reading. Therefore, inferential comprehension is not only effortful but it is also a strategic task (King, 2007, p. 269).

Third, critical comprehension or reading beyond the lines is considered to be the third and the highest level of comprehension in reading. According to Manzo and Manzo (1993, p. 5), reading beyond the lines is "the process of judging the *significance* of the author's message, and constructively applying it to other areas of knowledge and experience". At this level of comprehension, the reader can make his own critical judgment of what s/he is reading. This may entail the evaluation of both the text and its author. In considering the text, the reader assesses "its clarity, accuracy and any apparent exaggeration or bias" (Westwood,

2001, p. 21). In considering the author, the reader is able to detect the author' s good writing style, to appraise his word selection in the text and to appreciate his point of view (Westwood, 2008, p. 32). So, reading beyond the lines is not a task that all readers can reach easily; however, it demands a good reader who is able to appreciate the text he is reading, assess its quality and truthfulness and offer his/her opinion on the author' language and style.

All in all, the three levels of comprehension (literal, inferential, and critical) are important in reaching a successful understanding of the text. Equally important, these levels occur orderly and each level has its significance. In other words, the reader must understand what is explicitly stated in the text in order to infer meanings for it, and s/he must understand both (literal and inferential) meanings so that he can make a constructive evaluation for that text.
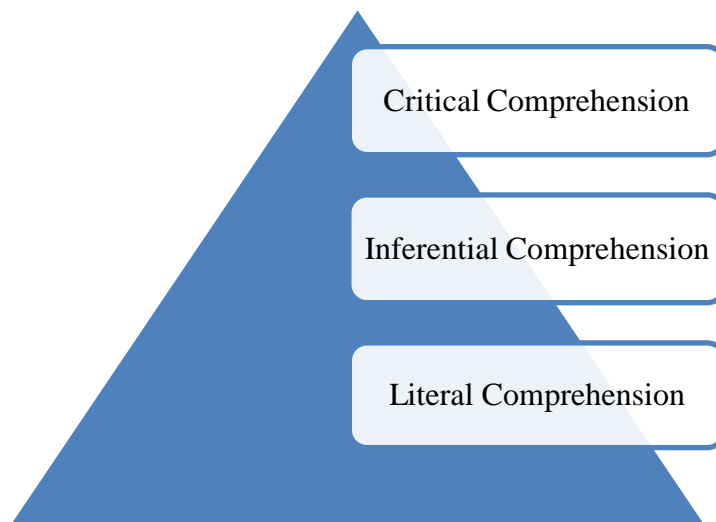
Figure 1.3. Levels of Reading Comprehension

1.7. Reading Comprehension Difficulties

Starting from the fact that reading is a complex process, some readers face difficulties when they read. In regard to this point, Weswood (2008, pp. 33-37) identified eight major difficulties that readers ecounter in learning to read. These difficulties can be summarized as follows:

- **Limited vocabulary knowledge:** reading comprehension is closely linked to readers' vocabulary repertoire. If readers do not recognize the meaning of many words within the text, it would be difficult for them to understand the writer's intended message.

- **Lack of fluency:** both slow and very fast reading lead to poor understanding. Slow reading restricts readers' ability to process words instead of understanding ideas, and very fast reading may hinder readers in understanding between the lines. However, proper reading speed allows readers to read carefully, smoothly, and use their available abilities so that they can easily construct meanings.

- **Lack of familiarity with the subject matter:** what readers know and ignore of the topic they tend to read affects their understanding. If readers already have some pre-existing knowledge of the text theme, they can understand the text with its specific details easily.

- **Difficulty level of the text (readability):** a text is complex when the reader faces difficulties in processing its concepts, sentences length, vocabulary, and structure. For this reason, the complixity of texts varies from one text type to another. In comparison to expository texts which include facts, descriptions, and explanations, narrative ones are easier to process.

- **Inadequate use of effective reading strategies:** poor comprehension caused by the absence or lack of reading strategies. Unlike good readers, poor readers either ignore what effective strategies they have to apply and when to apply them, or they only apply few strategies which undoubtedly impair their comprehension.

- **Weak verbal reasoning:** the ability to reason is closely related to readers' intelligence. Reasoning is the ability to understand the text being read in general, and readers' ability to go beyond the writer's messages to make connections between what they read and what they already know in particular.

- **Problems with processing information:** to some extent, the ability to process information is determined by readers' memory. High working-memory capacity readers process much more information than low working-memory capacity readers, thus, they comprehend better than others. For this reason, reducing factors that may weaken the working-memory capacity like slow reading, stress, and anxiety ensure success in comprehension performance.

- **Problems in recalling information after reading:** remembering what is being read strengthens readers' comprehension. Highlighting and summarizing the main ideas before, during, and after reading assist readers to recall information easily.

It is clearly realized that reading comprehension is not an easy task. However, it is a difficult process wherein readers face many difficulties that impede their comprehension success. Therefore, for ensuring better understanding, readers have to select texts that are convenient to their reading ability.

1.8. The role of Vocabulary Knowledge in Reading Comprehension

It is inappropriate to talk about reading comprehension without mentioning vocabulary knowledge. A large body of research conducted on reading comprehension provided empirical proof that vocabulary knowledge plays a crucial role in the development of reading comprehension performance (Jafaripour, Ghavami, & Sepahvand, 2018; Moghadam, Zainal, & Ghaderpour 2012; Nouri & Zerhouni, 2016; Kameli & Bin Baki, 2013). The relationship nature between the two mentioned variables was put in Hudson's words, "The close relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge has long been recognized. Measures of lexical knowledge are among the best predictors of reading comprehension ability" (2007, p. 227). In view to this quote, vocabulary knowledge largely reflects readers' comprehension level.

Grabe and Stoller (2011, p. 196) described the relationship between vocabulary knowledge growth and reading comprehension development as a reciprocal relationship. Vocabulary knowledge growth significantly assists students to comprehend texts successfully and easily. Similarly, the amount of reading, doubtless, enlarges students' vocabulary. In simpler words, we can say that the more vocabularies students know, the better they understand texts; and the more books they read, the greater vocabularies they learn. Since understanding written texts is highly dependent upon learners' vocabulary level, it is not surprising to find that poor readers are those who have limited vocabularies. In this context, Woolley (2011, p. 65) distinguished between skilled readers and learners with insufficient vocabulary. According to him, skilled readers tend to read as many lengthy and varied texts as possible and learning new vocabularies as a result. Furthermore, skilled readers have a tendency to deduce meanings of new words from the context using their existing knowledge. Conversely, learners with limited vocabularies avoid reading because they find it difficult. Obviously, this affects their vocabulary knowledge growth negatively.

1.9. Reading Comprehension Strategies

As a matter of fact, the act of reading involves more than just perceiving words in an accurate and spontanuous way; it also involves the use of certain strategies that are crucial in attaining a comprehensive understanding of texts and overcoming readers' difficulties.

Reading comprehension strategies are defined by Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) as "deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings of text" (p. 368). Accordingly, these strategies are effective in minimizing the reader's efforts, thus, facilitate his/her understanding. Graesser (2007, p. 6) offers a similar definition assuming that reading comprehension strategies are cognitive or behavioral actions that occur in a particular context with the purpose of enhancing readers' comprehension. In light of these definitions, it can be

realized that reading strategies are not automatic actions, but rather techniques which readers use consciously and purposely. This part introduces some of these strategies. Namely, skimming, scanning, activating and using background knowledge, questioning, and summarizing.

1.9.1. Skimming

Broadly, skimming is a quick-text reading for grasping its general meaning. In this respect, Verma (2015) defined skimming as "looking over a text/book quickly, in order to get a general or superficial idea of the content" (p. 301). However, not in all cases, skimming is used for a general understanding of a text, readers sometimes skim a text just to check if it includes the information they look for or not (Verma, 2015, p. 301). Regarding that skimming is a quick reading, when they skim a text, readers do not worry about its details, for example, they may read only the topic sentences, titles and subtitles, or the conclusion of a text without focusing on its supporting and specific ideas. They may also find it unnecessary to look for the meaning of unfamiliar words, or appreciating the author' style since this is a time consuming. In terms of its significance, Verma noted that skimming can raise readers' confidence because they believe that it is possible for them to understand a text without reading every word in it (Verma, 2015, p. 301).

1.9.2. Scanning

In contrary to skimming, scanning is a "very high-speed reading" (Mikuleckey & Jeffries, 1996, p. 15), through which the reader can locate the specific information that are needed and relevent to a purpose (Verma, 2015, P. 302). That is why, Mikuleckey and Jeffries (1996, p. 15) claimed that when they scan a text, readers have a purpose to attain or a question in their mind to answer, so that they are not obliged to read the whole text, but only the words or information that serve their need and answer their question. Hence, it is worth noting that scanning is the power of observation that enables the reader to be more selective and accurate.

It is widely agreed that skimming and scanning are two linked strategies that a reader uses simultaneously when reading a written discourse. For example, when a reader has a question in his mind, he may skim the text first in order to check if it is worth reading or no, then he reads it carefully to retrieve the needed information that may answer his question (Grellet, 1981; Reid, 2005; Verma, 2015).

1.9.3. Activating and Using Prior Knowledge

Prior knowledge, background knowledge and schematic knowledge are used interchangeably to refer to all information and experiences a person acquired throughout his life. In reading context, many specialists and researchers highlighted the strong and positive correlation between the reader's previous knowledge and his performance in reading comprehension (Callella, 2000; Carrasquillo & Rodriguez, 2002; Pang et al., 2003). In other words, the more students use their prior knowledge "including knowledge of the world, cultural knowledge, subject-matter knowledge and linguistic knowledge" (Pang et al., 2003, p. 13), and relating it to texts, the better they understand it (Brassell & Rasinski, 2008, p. 39). Doubtless, students have different previous knowledge. Accordingly, they may not achieve the same understanding of a text i.e., each student may interpret the text according to his own background knowledge. In this respect, Brassell and Rasinski (2008, p. 39) argued that teachers' role is such cases is to help students in connecting what they learned and experienced with what they are reading via using various strategies such as thinking-aloud or giving them the chance to share ideas with each other. In brief, it can be said that reading comprehension involves activating readers' prior knowledge, wherein the teacher has a significant role.

1.9.4. Predicting

Prediction, in its broader meaning, refers to readers' ability in guessing and expecting what may come next before its occurrence (Boushey & Moser, 2009, p. 61). A similar

understanding was put forward by Macceca (2014). However, she went further to emphasize the importance of prior knowledge in making predictions as follows: "Readers look at the title, the pictures, the organization, and the words chosen, and they compare and contrast what they see with what they already know" (p. 107). Moreover, Moreillon (2007) claimed that making predictions based heavily on the "inferences drawn from the author's or illustrator's creations" (p. 76). These ideas clearly indicate that predictions are not merely spontaneous guessing of what will happen, but instead are what Macceca (2014, p. 107) described as "educated guesses". In this context, proficient readers expect what may come next relying on both, the meanings they infer from the author' implied messages and the knowledge they already learned. According to Cunningham, Hall, and Cunningham (2011), "The important part of predictions is not whether they are right or wrong, but that they are made" (p. 55). Meaning that, as they read, readers may find their predictions true or wrong, but this does not matter. What it is important then, is expecting what will happen push readers to think and engage within the text and thus understanding it.

1.9.5. Questioning

Questioning is an important strategy that many educators emphasized its effectiveness in improving reading comprehension. Myers (2006, p. 144) claimed that questioning refers to readers' ability in formlating and asking both literal and inferential questions before, during, and after reading for better understanding. Gear (2008, p. 63) offered a similar understanding and he clarified that asking questions before reading is to determine the purpose of reading, during reading to understand both the content and the writer's intended message, and after reading to deepen the understanding of the text. However, not in all cases, readers find the answers of their questions easily. Sometimes they have to make efforts when answering the questions. In this regard, Moreillon (2007) identified three types of quetions as follows: "Questions that can be answered in the text, questions that require thinking or research

beyond the text, and questions that seem to have no answers at all" (p.59). Hence, questioning is not an easy task that all readers are able to do. The importance of this strategy was put in Moreillon's words, "Questioning keeps readers engaged" (p. 60). When readers ask questions about the text, this raise their motivation and curiosity to know the answers, and this help them to comprehend the text.

1.9.6. Summarizing

It is considered to be the last strategy readers can apply in the reading process. According to Mikuleckey and Jeffries (1996), "Summarizing is the retelling of the important parts of a passage in a much shorter form" (p. 167). When they summarize, readers are required to recapitulate in their own words what is being read and understood focusing just on the main ideas and eliminating the irrelevant details (Myers, 2006, p. 8). This clearly shows the significant role that summarizing plays in reading comprehension improvement. In this respect, in their empirical study, Khoshsima and Tiyar (2014) affirmed that applying this strategy positively affects the reader's performance in reading comprehension. They came to the conclusion that applying this strategy is highly dependent on teachers' instructions. Via summarizing instructions, teachers can know to what extent students understand the text, and even determining the difficult parts for them, obviously, this helps students in reaching better understanding for the text being read.

1.10. Previous Studies about the Relationship between Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension Skill

It is widely agreed that there is a strong and positive correlation between learners' reading strategies and their performance in reading comprehension. In their study on ways to improve students' reading comprehension skill, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016b) indicated that the application of effective reading strategies while reading a text significantly enhance reading comprehension proficiency.

Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016a), in onother study, in which they investigated the foctors that may affect EFL learners' reading comprehension performance, reached the conclusion that the aim of reading is to understand what is being read. They continued that successful learners intentionally use a variety of reading strategies to achieve this aim easily and effectively. Conversely, without such strategies, readers mostly encounter many difficulties that may impede their comprehension (Al-Jarrah & Binti Ismail, 2018, p. 315).

According to Ahmadi and Gilakjani (2012), predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing are the key strategies students use throughout the reading process to overcome their difficulties. In addition, they make some plans and techniques to monitor their comprehension. It is also found that skilled readers in comparison to unskilled readers know what, when, why, and how each of these strategies will be applied.

In the same line of thought, Alfaki and Siddiek (2013) carried out a study toward the impact of prior knowledge as one of the effective reading strategies on students' reading comprehension skill. The findings of this research revealed a significant correlation between the two variables. When EFL learners activate their background knowledge before reading the text can easily understand it. Hence, the lack of it negatively affects their comprehension. Furthermore, using this strategy increases readers' confidence since it makes them know some parts in the text even before reading it.

Bolukbas (2013) has also investigated the relationship between reading strategy use and reading comprehension success. The results showed that once the reading strategy usage increases the reading comprehension success increases as well. In this experimental study, the researcher also stressed the important role of the teacher. When students do not know which suitable strategy should apply, they rely on their teacher. The latter should determine what and how to employ these strategies.

It can be concluded that reading strategies and reading comprehension work hand in hand since the achievement of the latter significantly relies on the application of the former. It is often said that proficient reader is a strategic reader. That is to say, the one who is aware of what and how to employ these strategies to overcome his comprehension difficulties in comparison to less proficient reader. However, there are some cases when students cannot determine the appropriate strategy to use so, they should be dependent on their teacher.

Conclusion

From this chapter, it can be concluded that reading is an important skill in language learning, and at the same time, a complex cognitive process that entails comprehension with its three main levels. Due to its complexity, some readers fail to understand written materials for many causes. Limited vocabulary and the absence/lack of strategies use are regarded as the major causes that hinder readers' comprehension. For that reason, this chapter highlights the significant role of vocabulary knowledge along with effective reading comprehension strategies in achieving comprehensive understanding of written materials.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Perspective on Mobile Dictionaries

CONTENTS

Introduction

Mobile learning is a new learning mode that is gaining more and more popularity among teachers and learners in various fields due to the proliferation of various mobile technologies. Nowadays, many learners rely significantly on their mobile devices in general and the numerous applications available there in particular, for achieving their academic goals. In language learning, mobile dictionaries are among, if not indeed, the most popular applications that students use to develop their language learning skills. In light of this, the current chapter attempts to provide an overview of this sort of dictionaries. Therefore, it is made up of two sections. The first section attempts to present the relevant literature of mobile learning focusing on its definition, characteristics, and mobile applications. For the second section which is purely devoted to dictionaries, it first explains what the notion of dictionary in general means and identifies its types. Then, it sheds more light on electronic dictionaries with its main types including mobile dictionaries. This latter is considered the important part of this section. In this regard, a comprehensive picture of mobile dictionaries, and its characteristics in addition to the most effective mobile dictionary applications for EFL learners are presented. Later in this section, findings of previous dictionary importance and use studies about learning EFL are reviewed.

I. Section One: Mobile Learning

The rapid development of electronic and internet technologies make a radical change in the way people learn, moving from traditional ways to new ones where numerous technological tools are used as a medium. Using mobile devices for learning purposes is a clear example of such changes, and this will be the main focus of this section. To do so, it is necessary to give an account of what electronic learning is, and what are its main forms for ensuring a better understanding of the concept of mobile learning.

2.1. Electronic Learning (E-Learning)

2.1.1. Definition of Electronic Learning (E-Learning)

Starting from Bowles's words, "For all the publicity it has received in recent years, e-learning remains something of an enigma, and its boundaries are far from clear" (2004, p. 3). E-learning is a broad concept that has different understandings. Providing a specific and straightforward definition of the concept of e-learning is a hard issue because the term itself means different things to different people.

E-learning is, in its broad modern meaning, "the use of information and computer technologies to create learning experiences" (Horton, 2006, p. 1). This definition considers e-learning as a way whereby individuals can acquire and at the same time transfer knowledge and information through electronic devices, particularly computers for learning purposes. Hill and Wouters (2010) also shared this broad definition. However, they went further to identify all possible information and communication technologies (ICTs) that can be used in transferring knowledge to learners, including internet, intranet, CD-ROM, interactive TV, teleconferencing, computer-conferencing, and chat (Hill & Wouters, 2010, p. 204).

In a narrow sense, Rosenberg (2001) confined e-learning to the internet as, "the use of Internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance" (p. 28). He further argued that there are three basic criteria which e-learning is based on:

- It is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storage/ retrieval, distribution and sharing of instruction or information;

- It is delivered to the end-user, via a computer using standard Internet technology;

- It focuses on the broadest view of learning solutions that go beyond the traditional paradigms of training (Rosenberg, 2001, pp. 28-29).

The above quote clearly shows that e-learning is not a classroom or face-to-face learning where learners directly interact with their teachers and/or their classmates. Rather is done via the use of media technologies particularly internet where teachers and learners interact online. Shank and Sitze (2004) supported this notion by saying that network technologies are the key element in delivering formal and informal instructions. Taking the previous definitions that defined e-learning from technological perspectives into account, e-learning is not restricted only to computer-based learning or network-based learning; however, it includes both computer-based and network-based learning.

Other definitions of e-learning include the one provided by Driscoll (2002, p. 1) which considered e-learning as a subset of distance learning where teachers can design, deliver, and manage instructions to their learners using computers as a medium. The e-learning includes not only computers but any other electronic devices like smartphones, tablets…etc. In this respect, Khan defined e-learning as:

> An innovative approach for delivering well-designed, learner-centered, interactive, and facilitated learning environment to anyone, anyplace, anytime by utilizing the attributes and resources of various digital technologies along with other forms of learning materials suited for open, flexible, and distributed learning environment. (2005 p. 3)

In view to this definition, e-learning is a way that facilitates and supports self- and lifelong-learning, because individuals are free in choosing the tool that fits their own style in acquiring and sharing knowledge with no restrictions in terms of place and time. In light of all previous definitions, there is a consensus that e-learning is a new way of learning that has emerged as a result of the rapid development of ICTs, whereby learners can achieve better learning away from formal settings like the classroom, through the use of ICT tools.

2.1.2. Forms of E-Learning

2.1.2.1. Blended Learning

Despite the considerable attention given to blended learning (BL) as a new way of teaching/learning process particularly in higher education, there is an outstanding debate regarding the nature of BL. Many researchers defined BL in a variety of ways, but the most common is that which refers to the combination of onsite, traditional place-based classroom (face-to-face) learning and online, ICTs based learning for ensuring better learning environment (Blankson & Ntuli, 2014; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008; Lee & Chan, 2008; Stein & Graham, 2014; Thorne, 2003).

In terms of effectiveness, Glazer (2012, pp. 3-4) asserted that BL is an effective approach for both teachers and students. For teachers it allows them to design courses in different ways; and for learners, BL is a way that allows them to work independently via online portion, on the one hand, and collectively through face-to-face courses on the other. As for its advantages, Stein and Graham (2014, pp. 14-17) identified three primary benefits of BL that can be fully realized if blended courses are done intentionally, purposefully and in the right way.

First, it makes the learning process more accessible and convenient for all learners. BL provides the opportunity for traditional learners who prefer to stay in touch with their teachers in formal settings, through face-to-face classes. Conversely, it offers non-traditional learners who have other responsibilities outside the institution like a job or family to care for a significant amount of online courses. Hence, BL is a golden opportunity whereby those learners can carry on their studies and take their other responsibilities at once.

Second, it enhances the learning process than any other learning mode (face-to-face or online). This is mainly due to many reasons:

- Blended courses are more purposely designed as they rely basically on pedagogical designers and educational technologists.

- BL assists learners to perform better via different methods and explicit guidance in contrast to onsite classes where directions are received primarily from the teacher.

- BL facilitates access to various learning activities and materials which lets many learners participate according to their own schedule. This may, in turn, grants them more individualized learning opportunities.

- BL offers students increased opportunities to engage and collaborate freely with their teachers and classmates outside the classroom via online classes where this issue may be difficult to do for many students in face-to-face classes.

Third, BL can truly reduce or save students, teachers, and institutions' money. For students and teachers especially those who live far from their institutions can take the advantage of less travel costs and time in the sense that they can deliver or receive at least fifty percent of courses online. Equally important, where many courses can be available online, reliance on campus resources like classrooms can be increased as a result. Thus, this reduction saves significantly institutions that suffer from physical resources shortage. Concisely, BL with its benefits is more beneficial than other learning modes as it respects different needs and preferences of learners on one hand, and combines different learning styles varying from onsite class sessions to online ones, on the other.

2.1.2.2. Mobile Learning (M-Learning)

a. Definition of Mobile Learning (M-Learning)

Along with ICTs advances, mobile devices have become vital tools that have occupied almost every aspect of our lives during the last few years. Their function has been shifted from means of communication and entertainment to means of education. Such a shift led to the emergence of m-learning notion which in turn has taken increasing interest among

researchers. Despite this growing interest, it is difficult to find one commonly accepted definition of m-learning because the meaning of "mobility" itself is still debatable between who refer to m-learning as the mobility of technology, and those who view it as the mobility of learners and learning (El-Hussein & Cronje, 2010, p. 20).

From a technological perspective, m-learning is what Pilar, Jorge, and Cristina (2013) pointed, "a teaching and learning methodology that uses mobile phones or other handheld devices with some form of wireless connectivity, such as phones, PDAs and tablets, among others" (p. 1190). In this respect, m-learning is a new way of learning as well as teaching process where all kinds of wireless, personal, mobile, flexible, and portable technological devices without exception play a special role.

Opposing to the previous perspective, m-learning is not only a case of mobile devices' use but rather "any sort of learning and knowledge sharing that happens due to social awareness when the learner is at a fixed, predetermined location but in varied learning contexts" (Wan, 2011, p. 61). M-learning from this angle gives more emphasis to the mobility and flexibility of learners and learning in the sense that learners can participate in learning activities with no restrictions in terms of physical presence. That is to say, they can access information anywhere and anytime.

Concerning the second perspective, Gloria and Natividad (2015, p. 82) asserted that mobile devices are not totally neglected but they play a partial role, because m-learning in its heart is about how to learn and not only about the use of mobile devices. The latter is just a means to an end and not the end itself. That is to say, these technological devices support the learning process but are not the center of learning. Consequently, m-learning is the combination of both technology and learners/learning mobility; where the former stands as a medium in the access of knowledge that can be in different places and different times.

b. Characteristics of M- Learning

It is widely agreed that the effectiveness and importance of m-learning lie on its characteristics. In regard to this point, Ozdamli and Cavus (2011, pp. 940-941) in their article identified seven main characteristics of m-learning (Figure 2.1). These characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- **Ubiquitous/Spontaneous:** as compared to other learning types, learning with the utilization of wireless technologies is more spontaneous as it allows learners to access knowledge anywhere and anytime.

- **Portable size of mobile tools:** mobile devices are light and small which make them easy to be carried and conveyed to different places.

- **Blended:** both teachers and students combine m-learning with classroom instruction to maximize the benefits of onsite and online methods.

- **Private:** m-learning is private in the sense that it is personal i.e., each person has his own device through which loading information is done independently from other learners.

- **Interactive:** m-learning creates an interactive learning environment in learning and teaching activities via the engagement with technology, in which mobile devices function as an interactive medium.

- **Collaborative:** mobile technologies remove all communication boundaries and allow learners to learn outside the formal classroom, where they can easily collaborate with their peers and/or teachers.

- **Instant information:** mobile tools enable learners to access information quickly such as definitions, examples, formula…etc.

Figure 2.1. Characteristics of Mobile Learning (Ozdamli & Cavus, 2011, p.940).

c. Mobile Applications

Recently, mobile applications or mobile apps have appeared as new supplementary tools for people. These apps are designed to meet all the users' needs including personal as well as educational ones. broadly speaking, mobile apps are application software for mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. Liu and He (2014, p. 10) claimed that mobile apps are "easily available through application distribution platform called App Market, and these apps are typically operated by the owner of the mobile operating system, such as the Apple App Store, Google Play, Windows Phone Store, and BlackBerry App World". Through such systems, users can easily download these apps to their mobile devices.

According to Cruz and Paiva (2016, p. 6), mobile apps fall into three broad types: *browser access apps*, *native apps*, *hybrid* (*web* and *mixed*) *apps*. First, *browser access apps* also known as *web apps* are substantially websites as they are accessible and available on any device via a browser where internet connection is required. Second, *native apps* are distinct from *web apps* in that they are installed on mobile devices typically through various platforms like Google Play or Apple' App Store (Westermann, 2017, p. 45), with no need to the internet

connection. Third, *hybrid apps*, as its name implies, are a mixture of both *web* and *native apps* and are generally divided into two: *web* and *mixed hybrid apps*. The former refers to apps that can be installed on the device but require the internet connection to obtain data as in facebook and twitter apps. Whereas, the second can be installed in the device and work offline i.e., do not obligatory require internet connection. The table below taken from Cruz and Paiva (2016, p. 6) summarizes the differences between mobile app types.

Table 2.1

Mobile Application Types and Its Factors

Key Factors	Browser Access Apps	Native Apps	Hybrid Apps (Web)	Hybrid Apps (Mixed)
Installed on the device	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Accessed through native browser	Yes	No	No	No
Get data from remote server	Yes	No	Yes	Depend
Importance of device memory	Low	High	Depend	High
Require internet connection	Yes	No	Yes	Depend

II. Section Two: Dictionaries

2.2. What is a Dictionary

Etymologically, the word dictionary is derived from the Medieval Latin word *Dictionarium* meaning a manual or book of words, which in turn is originated from the Greek term *Dictio* which means a collection of words or a phrase. According to Oxford dictionary of English (2010), a dictionary is "A book that lists the words of a language in alphabetical order and gives their meaning, or that gives the equivalent words in a different language". Kirkness (2004, p. 54) asserted that the dictionary is the most widely used book in the field of education because it is an indispensable source of information on any aspect of the form

and/or meaning of words in the source or the target language. A dictionary in this sense is an essential and principal source through which individuals in general and language learners in particular get the meaning and/or translation of words in their preferable language in an accurate, orderly and comprehensible manner.

The previous definitions are basically in agreement with the definition provided by Madrecha (2010, p. 46) who identified the term dictionary as a "taxonomy" or "central location" where a variety of meanings and precise definitions of terms are arranged in alphabetical order. In this respect, Hamouda (2013) claimed that a dictionary is a fundamental tool and support for S/FL learners in general because it provides them with "valuable information in all aspects of language. It includes phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic information in addition to etymological and usage information" (p. 227). Taking this quote into account, the role of a dictionary is not limited just in supplying meanings and translations of words, but it has other missions to perform. Besides words' definitions, dictionary users can find the right pronunciation, correct spelling, grammar, synonyms, antonyms, and even the abbreviation of words in one or more than one language. Therefore, dictionaries are books that include the linguistic knowledge and not any other kind of knowledge.

2.3. Types of Dictionaries

Regardless of its nature printed or electronic, dictionaries can be classified into two main categories: monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. The classification into each category depends on certain features like the size or headwords number, the language used, the user, and the purpose behind using them.

2.3.1. Monolingual Dictionary

Monolingual as its name implies is simply the use of one language. Accordingly, monolingual dictionary (MD) is broadly defined as the book or source that provides users

with the meanings and/or definitions of words in one language (Dash, 2009; Rasmussen, 2010; Nicolson, Adams, Furnborough, Adinolfi, & Truman, 2005). In other words, when any dictionary presents detailed and precise information about words of a language using words or means of that same language is called MD. For example, an English-English dictionary is a MD because both the headwords and explanations come in the English language.

It is important to note that MDs split into two: *standard monolingual dictionaries* (SMDs) for native speakers and *monolingual learners' dictionaries* (MLDs) (East, 2008, p. 15). In both types, headwords and explanations are written in the same language, but the primary difference is that MLDs are designed to serve the needs of S/FL language learners. As compared to the first, MLDs contain less number of headwords, written in a simplified language, and include main aspects of language such as pronunciation, grammatical category, meaning…etc, which are not found in SMDs, because native speakers tend to know such information (Schnoor, 2003, p. 5).

Given that this sort of dictionaries is written in the target language, it is not surprising to find some language learners face difficulties in understanding the provided explanations. Such difficulty is carefully stated in East's words, "the grammatical structures used in defining examples may be complex, and may be beyond the competence of anybody other than an advanced learner" (2008, p. 18). Nevertheless, a MLD is still a valuable tool for learning especially for S/FL learners. Through this dictionary type, learners can understand some aspects of the target language (Figure 2.2) including "the meaning of words and phrases, spelling and pronunciation, word stress, words' part of speech, grammatical information about the word, the use of target word in context, its synonyms and antonyms, the register of the word" (Koca, Pojani, & Jashari-Cicko, 2014, p. 75). Besides that, a MLD may assist learners to learn independently, expand their vocabulary knowledge of that language and think in the target language. (Koca, et al., 2014, p. 75).

> **but.ton** /'bʌtn/ *n* **1** knob or disc made of wood, metal, etc sewn onto a garment as a fastener or as an ornament: *a coat, jacket, shirt, trouser button* ◦ *lose a button* ◦ *sew on a new button* ◦ *do one's buttons up* ⇒ illus at JACKET. **2** small knob that is pressed to operate a doorbell, a switch on a machine, etc: *Which button do I press to turn the radio on?* **3**(idm) **bright as a button** ⇒ BRIGHT. **on the 'button** (*US infml*) precisely: *You've got it on the button!*
> ▷ **but.ton** *v* **1**(a)[Tn,Tn.p] ∼sth(up) fasten sth with buttons: *button (up) one's coat, jacket, shirt, etc.* (b)[I,Ip] ∼(up) be fastened with buttons: *This dress buttons at the back.* **2**(idm) **button (up) one's lip** (*US sl*) be silent. **3**(phr v) **button sth up** (*infml*) complete sth successfully: *The deal should be buttoned up by tomorrow.*
> □ **,buttoned 'up** silent and reserved; shy: *I've never met anyone so buttoned up.*
> **,button–down 'collar** collar with ends that are fastened to the shirt with buttons.
> **'buttonhole** *n* **1** slit through which a button is passed to fasten clothing. ⇒ illus at JACKET. **2** flower worn in the buttonhole of the lapel of a coat or jacket. - *v*[Tn] make (sb) stop and listen, often reluctantly, to what one wants to say.
> **'buttonhook** *n* hook for pulling a button into place through a buttonhole.
> **,button 'mushroom** small unopened mushroom.

Figure 2.2. A Monolingual Learners' Dictionary (MLD) Entry (Arnold, 1994, p.89).

2.3.2. Bilingual Dictionary

In contrast to the MD, a bilingual one according to East (2008, p. 17), is a reference tool which involves the use of two different languages when describing the words of a language. This definition seems very broad and overt allowing complete freedom as how these words are described. In light of this idea, Benson (2004) clarified that "bilingual dictionaries describe headwords through translation equivalents, which may take the form of a cognate, a single word equivalent or a longer explanatory phrase" (p. 40). Therefore, a bilingual dictionary (BD) is not confined to one language only but rather is the one whose headwords are written in one language and their equivalents in another. As with MDs, BDs may include other information which may assist their users particularly language learners in understanding some aspects of the target language like spelling, pronunciation, and word's part of speech (Figure 2.3).

To put differently, Mongwe (2013, p. 128) narrowly described BDs as "Translation dictionaries", that "coordinate with lexical units of *one language* those *lexical units* of another *language* which are equivalent in their lexical meaning" (Zgusta, 1971, p. 274).

Accordingly, the prime function of such dictionaries is to provide users with word equivalents and not its analysis or definition like MDs do. Mongwe (2013) further subdivided this sort of dictionaries into two types, unidirectional and monodirectional/bidirectional BDs (p. 129). Meaning that translation equivalents may come in one direction only, for example, English-French dictionary, or in two directions as what Yong and Peng (2007, p. 76) mentioned "two-in-one dictionary", where users can switch to and from both languages, for example, English-French/French-English dictionary.

button ['bʌtn] **1** *n* **(a)** (*garment, door; bell, lamp, fencing foil*) bouton *m*. **chocolate** ~s pastilles *fpl* de chocolate. **2** *vt* (*also* ~ **up**) *garment* boutonner. **3** *vi* (*garment*) se boutonner. **4** *cpd* **buttonhook** tirebouton *m*; **button mushroom** (petit) champignon *m* de couche *or* de Paris.

printer ['prIntə] *n* **(a)** imprimeur *m*; (*typographer*) typographe *mf*, imprimeur. **the text has gone to the** ~ le texte est chez l'imprimeur; ~'s **devil** apprenti imprimeur; ~'s **error** faute *f* d'impression, coquille *f*; ~'s **ink** encre *f* d'imprimerie; ~'s **reader** correcteur *m*, -trice *f* (d'épreuves). **(b)** (*Comput*) imprimante *f*. **(c)** (*Phot*) tifeuse *f*.

Figure 2.3. Two Bilingual Dictionary (BD) Entries (Arnold, 1994, p.89).

2.4. Electronic Dictionaries

Although they came into existence just in the late of 1980s after the birth of machine translation (1940) and with the development of computer technologies (Zhang, 2015, p. 428), electronic dictionaries (EDs) prove to be one of the most effective and utilized learning tools nowadays. Granger (2012, p. 2) provided a broad and simple understanding of the concept of EDs as a "collection of structured electronic data that gives information about the form, meaning, and use of words in one or more languages and are stored in a range of devices (PC, Internet, mobile device)". Doubtless, in this technological era, almost all people own and use one of such devices (PC, internet, mobile device), if not indeed all of them. Accordingly, as compared to traditional dictionaries that may not be available for learners all the time, EDs

are easy to access. In her paper, Nesi (2000) made a vigorous attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of ED as follows:

> The term electronic dictionary (or ED) can be used to refer to any reference material stored in electronic form that gives information about the spelling, meaning, or use of words. Thus a spell-checker in a word-processing program, a device that scans and translates printed words, a glossary for on-line teaching materials, or an electronic version of a respected hard-copy dictionary are all EDs of a sort, characterised by the same system of storage and retrieval. (2000, p. 839)

So, EDs can be any non-print form of dictionaries that supply users with in-depth information about words like their meaning, spelling, and usage. Nesi's definition clearly shows that EDs can be available online, as it also can be just a copy of paper dictionaries converted into electronic devices.

2.5. Types of Electronic Dictionaries

Broadly speaking, EDs fall into two main categories: offline and online, which in turn divide into four types: hand-held/pocket electronic dictionaries, CD-ROM dictionaries, online/internet dictionaries, and mobile dictionaries (Zheng & Wang, 2016, p. 146).

2.5.1. Hand-Held/Pocket Electronic Dictionaries

Outwardly, pocket electronic dictionaries (PEDs) are similar to laptop computers as they are consisted of "a micro CPU [central processing unit] chip, data RAM [random access memory], LCD [liquid crystal display] module, keyboard module, and image DMA [direct memory access] module" (Zhang, 2015, p. 429). As compared to laptop computers, PEDs are small in size, lightweight, easy to carry; thus, they are more practical than traditional printed dictionaries (see Figure 2.4). Additionally, they have the audio feature through which users can hear the right pronunciation of words. This sort of dictionaries is produced in almost all

countries of the world, yet, it is more popular in South-East Asia than in other countries (Nesi, 1998, p. 5).

Figure 2.4. Pocket Electronic Dictionaries (PED) (Berber-Irabien, 2010, p. 69).

2.5.2. CD- ROM Dictionaries

They refer to all dictionary types installed on compact disks (CDs). It is worth noting that these dictionaries are not developed particularly for CDs, rather they are printed dictionaries converted on CDs; and they can be opened and read either by computers technologies such as laptops or electronic book-player (Zhang, 2015, p. 429). The storage space of CD-ROM is nearly 600 MegaBytes, capacious enough to embrace two dictionaries easily (Nesi, 1998, p. 7). Nowadays, there are many CD-ROM dictionaries for language learners available with their printed versions in the market like *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster dictionary*, and *Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary* (Figure 2.5), to mention but few. In her article, Nesi (1996, p. 537) pinpointed four benefits that make CD-ROM dictionaries more preferable than their printed versions:

- They can cross-reference within and between sources published separately in book form;

- They can provide direct links to other computer applications;

- They can enable 'fuzzy' and complex searches;

- They can interact with users to develop vocabulary and dictionary skills.

Therefore, using CD-ROM dictionaries are much more practical than many book dictionaries as they are easy to carry and use on one hand, and help users to learn the correct pronunciation of search word on the other. The following figure presents *Cambridge Advanced Learner' Dictionary* on CD-ROM.
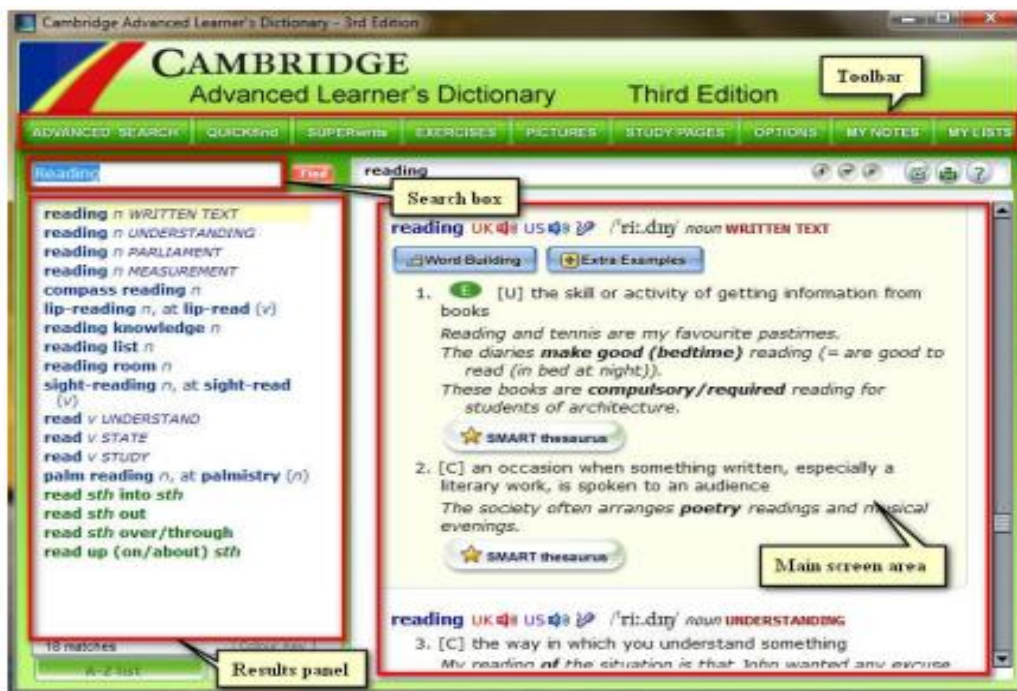
Figure 2.5. Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary on CD-ROM

(Hamdi, 2016, p. 99).

2.5.3. Internet/Online Dictionaries

There are an amazing number of free dictionaries available on the internet and accessed via a web browser through the use of computer technologies or mobile devices. Unlike CD-ROM dictionaries, online ones can be both printed dictionaries available on online versions such as *Oxford learners' Dictionary* (https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/) (Figure 2.6) and *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (https://www.merriam-webster.com/), and/or others that are developed particularly as internet dictionaries like *Dictionary. Com*

(https://www.dictionary.com/). In terms of their features, online dictionaries might comprise extra services unavailable in other ED types or even in hard-copy versions, for instance, they cover a large lexicographic data than any other dictionary type as they require the internet connection. Add to that, they offer easy and rapid access to the needed information about the search word, as they also can be "updated immediately when new words or meanings enter the language" (Guffey & Seefer, 2010, p. 9).

Based on their functionality, Zhang (2015, p. 429) claimed that online dictionaries can be classified into four types:

- Single- unit versions usually can be loaded and installed on the computer to translate Web pages and display data from different languages.

- Single online versions are usually attached to a website and can be consulted at any time.

- A dictionary website puts together tens, hundreds, and even thousands of dictionaries in different languages and subjects on one home/index page.

- A dictionary website that is in fact translation software based on bilingual dictionaries such as, translate.google.com and Babylon.com.
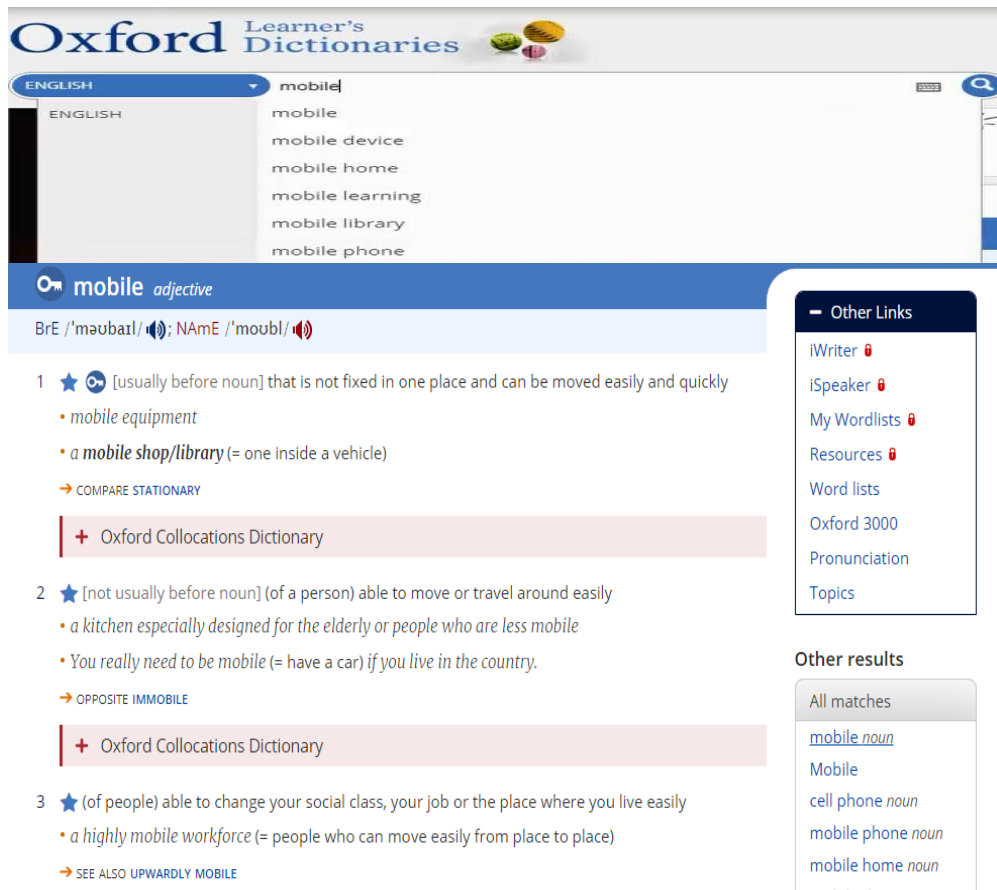
Figure 2.6. A Laptop Screen-shot of Online Oxford Learners' Dictionaries.

2.5.4. Mobile Dictionaries

2.5.4.1. Definition of Mobile Dictionaries

As there are different EDs accessible via computers and internet, there are also others that are available in all kinds of mobile devices including smartphones, laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and tablets. Such sort of dictionaries can be *network-based*, as it can be also *stand-alone* dictionaries (Moon, Hong, & Kim, 2008, p. 59). The former might refer either to a dictionary server that can be accessed from mobile devices, or dictionary apps that can be downloaded on the device where internet connectivity is required to obtain data. On contrary, *stand-alone* mobile dictionaries might include just dictionaries apps downloaded and installed on the smartphone or any other mobile device through Google Play or Apple's App Store platforms, with no need to internet connection because they can work on offline mode.

2.5.4.2. Characteristics of Mobile Dictionaries

Aslan (2016, p. 2) stressed that mobile dictionaries are valuable tools that contribute significantly in the effectivness of learning because of its motivational nature. Furthermore, he claimed that mobile dictionaries have many characteristics which in turn make it better than the printed versions. These charateristics are summarized as follows:

- Mobile dictionaries are free of charge in the sense that they can be downloaded and installed on the device with no need to pay for its use.

- They are lightweight and portable so that learners can use them anywhere and anytime they want.

- Mobile dictionaries are easy to use where learners can look for meanings and translations of words with only few touches which; therefore a time saving task.

- They offer the audio pronunciation of words which is not available in printed dictionaries (Aslan, 2016, p. 5).

Briefly, mobile dictionaries prove to be an effective tools in language learning whereby learners can enlarge their vocabulary knowledge easily and rapidly.

2.5.4.3. Best Mobile Dictionary Apps for English Language Learners

According to "Dictionary Apps for Android and iOS" (2017), the following apps are the best English-English/English-another language dictionary apps that English language learners may install on their Android and/or iOS devices to receive in-depth information about words.

a. Oxford Dictionary of English

According to Sawant (2017, pp. 9-10), *Oxford Dictionary* app is among the best free dictionary apps installed in the smartphones for English language learners. It is a large app in

size as it covers more than 350,000 words with their meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and history. Add to that, this app has the advantage that any word can be saved offline where users can review it at any time they need with no internet connectivity. Nonetheless, the *Oxford Dictionary App* does not work on offline mode, rather, it is available for paid users only (premium version).
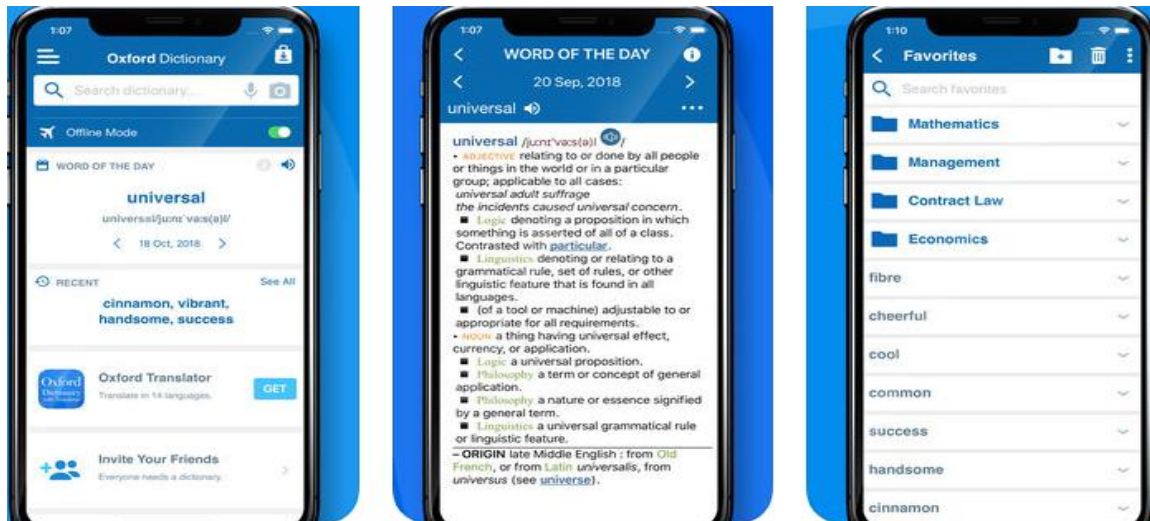
Figure 2.7. Oxford Dictionary of English App Interface and Simple of its Use

(A Laptop Screen-shot from App Store).

b. Merriam-Webster App

It is an American dictionary app listed at the top of the most popular apps in Google Play Store and Apple App Store. This app is free and designed for Android and iOS smartphones or tablets. In both versions, the *Merriam-Webster* app can be used at any time and any place as it does not require the internet connectivity to upload data. Though it is supported by advertisements which may be an annoying issue at times when the device is connected to Wi-Fi, it offers various features that may help English language learners like thesaurus (synonyms and antonyms), word definitions, example sentences to show how the search word is used in the context, and even voice search which allows the user to look up to the word using just his/her voice with no need to write it down (Sawant, 2017, pp. 9-10). In

addition to that, when the internet is available, this app offers the opportunity for users to test their vocabulary via vocabulary quizzes, and check how words are correctly pronounced by English speakers (Beach & O'Brien, 2015, p. 131).
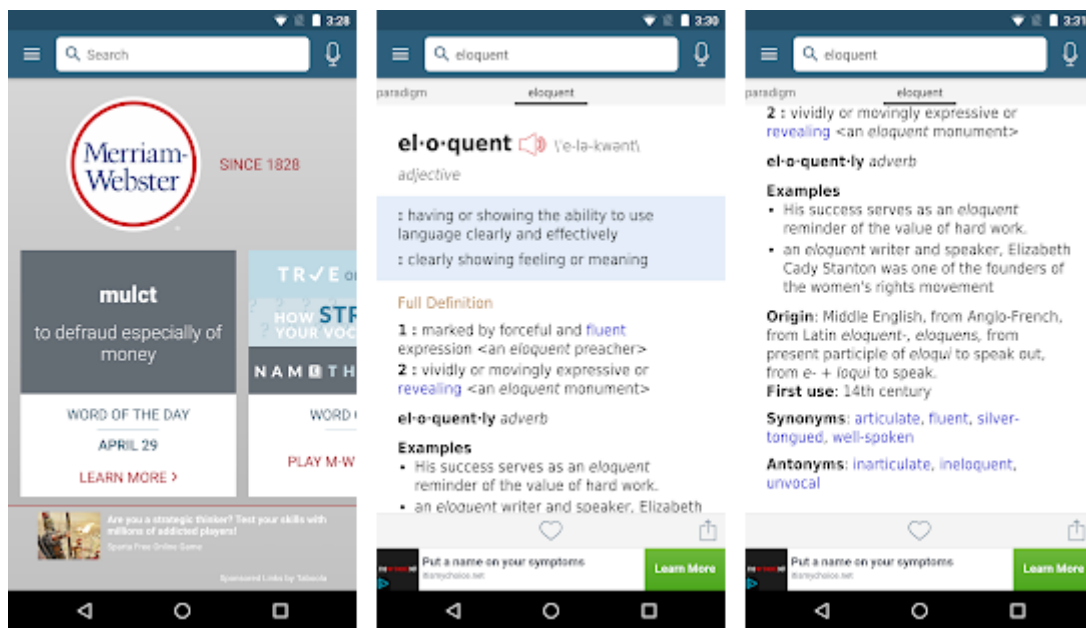
Figure 2.8. Merriam-Webster App Icon with Simple of its Use

(A Laptop Screen-shot from Google Play Store).

c. Dictionary. Com

Dictionary. Com is another English dictionary app that is available on both Android and iOS devices. With this app, users can learn the basic information about the word including its meaning, synonyms, antonyms, origins, and even its right pronunciation. As for its extra functions such as word day where the app provides users with a new word each day to enlarge their vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary building quizzes to test this knowledge, and using the user's voice instead of spelling words when looking for their meaning all work only online with internet connection ("Dictionary Apps for Android and iOS," 2017). In addition to all these features, *Dictionary. Com* app is a translation dictionary that can offer the translation/equivalents of words in more than thirty languages (Joshi, 2018).
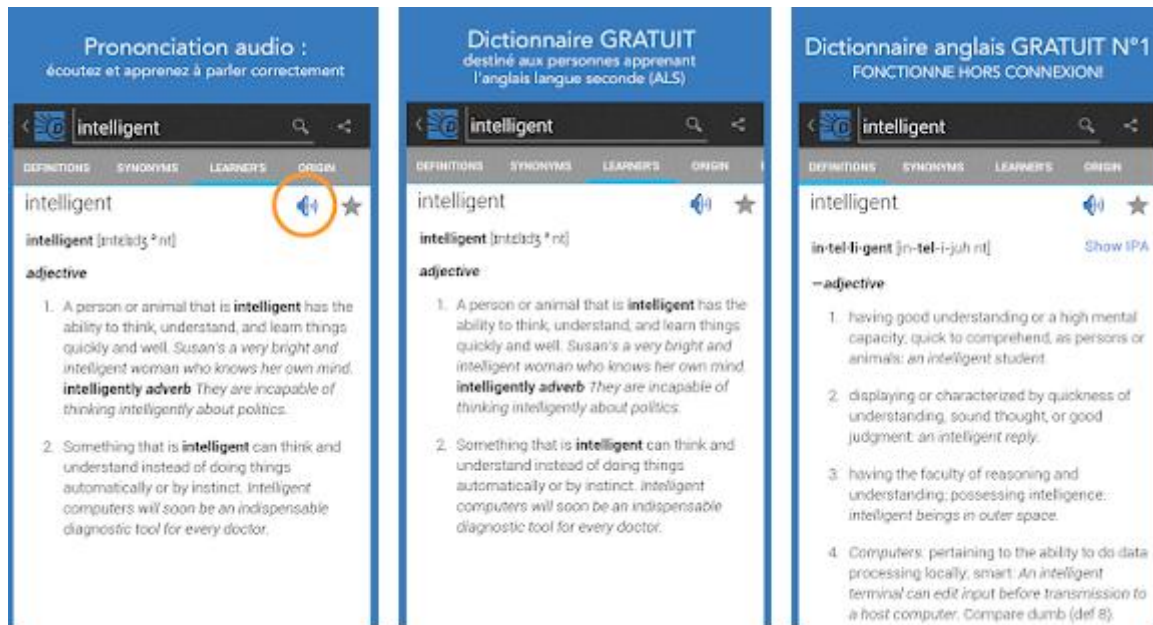
Figure 2.9. Dictionary. Com App Interface and Simple of its Use

(A Laptop Screen-shot from Google Play Store).

d. English Dictionary - Offline

It is a free offline dictionary app available on Play Store platform, thus, it can be installed just on Android devices and not on iOS ones. Although it works only in offline mode where there is no internet connectivity, it includes more than 318,000 words with its definitions that are mainly gleaned from English Wiktionary. Add to this, *English Dictionary* app includes great features that can help its users particularly English language learners like the audio pronunciation of words in both British and American, the origins of words, and the integrated thesaurus that offers many synonyms and antonyms of the search word. More than that, this app has various themes through which the user can select the suitable for him/her ("Dictionary Apps for Android and iOS," 2017).
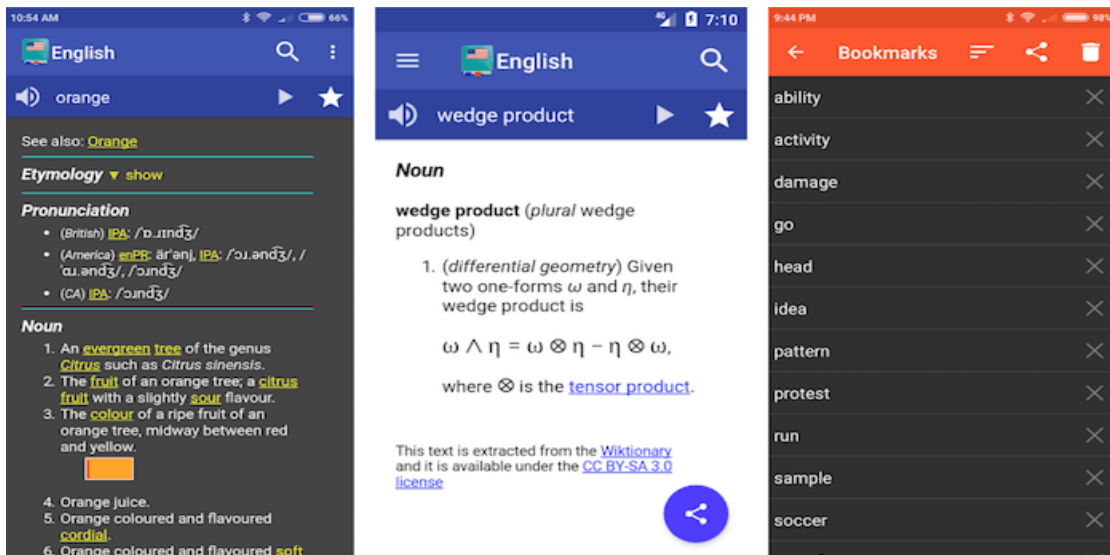
Figure 2.10. English Dictionary - Offline App Interface and Simple of its Use

(A laptop Screen-shot from Google Play Store).

e. Dictionary - English Offline

In contrast to *English Dictionary Offline* app, this app is free and available only for iOS users. It is composed of more than 147,000 words along with their definitions, synonyms, antonyms, hypernyms, hyponyms, and meronyms in addition to their audio pronunciation ("Dictionary Apps for Android and iOS," 2017).
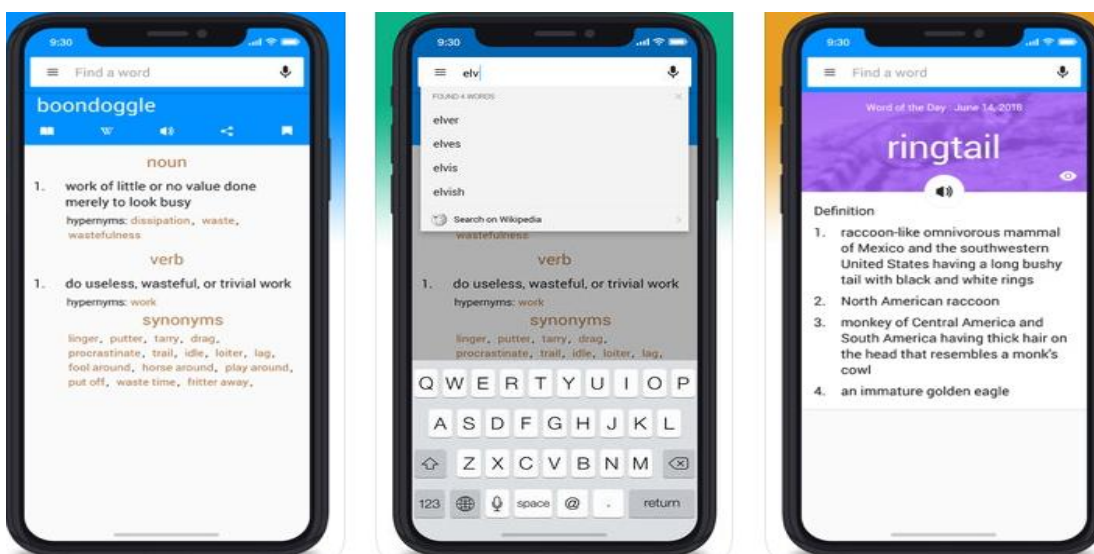
Figure 2.11. Dictionary - English Offline App Interface and Simple of its Use

(A Laptop Screen-shot from App Store).

f. Google Translate App

It is a free app for both Android and iOS users. Unlike the aforementioned apps that focus primarily on the meanings and synonyms of words in English language, *Google Translate* app is a translation service that provides users with equivalents of words, sentences, and even paragraphs in 59 languages when it is used offline ("Dictionary Apps for Android and iOS," 2017). However, when the mobile device is connected to Wi-Fi, this app works as any other dictionary covering many information about words such as its definitions, synonyms, and grammatical category, in addition to its translation in any language among 103 languages (Zaino, 2018).
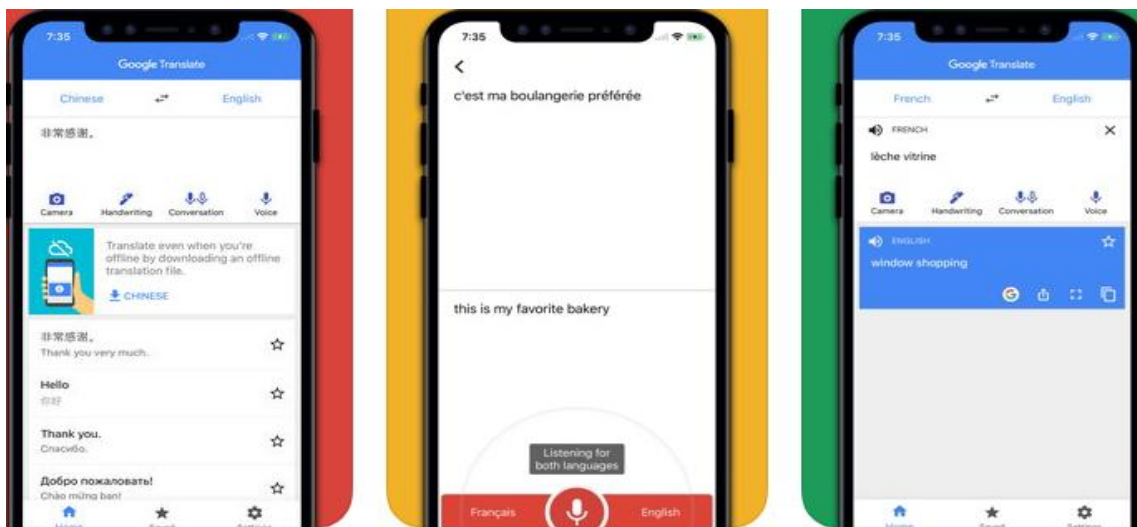
Figure 2.12. Google Translate App Interface and Simple of its Use

(A Laptop Screen-shot from App Store)

All in all, the above apps are among the best dictionary apps designed for Android and/or iOS mobile devices. Regardless of their monolingual or bilingual nature and whether internet connectivity is required or not, these apps are useful reference tools particularly for English language learners as they allow learners to learn the meanings and equivalents of words. Equally important, these apps are different in terms of design and use. Accordingly, before downloading the app on the device, it is better for users to find out how a particular

app is used in order to take advantage of all its features.

2.5.4.4. Previous Studies about the Effectiveness of Mobile Dictionaries in Learning EFL

Surprisingly, despite their perceived advantages for their users particularly language learners, relatively little research scrutinizing the importance and use of mobile dictionaries could be found in the field. Dashtestani (2013) for instance, set out to explore EFL teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of EDs for learning English. The results revealed that both, students and teachers had positive attitudes towards the use of EDs in learning language, especially in enhancing students' autonomy. The results also showed that students were using dictionaries installed in their cellphones more than other kinds of EDs. The latter promotes the idea that mobile dictionaries are the most used applications among EFL learners.

In the same line of thought, Rahimi and Miri (2014) investigated the relationship between mobile dictionaries use and language learning. The results obtained from this study affirmed that subjects who used mobile dictionaries achieved higher scores in language achievement test which is consisted of five main parts including listening, vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and writing than those who did not use dictionaries at all or who relied primarily on hard-copy dictionaries. Subsequently, these findings clearly highlight the close and positive correlation that exists between the two mentioned variables.

In a similar investigation, Zou, Xie, and Wang (2015) examined the impact of mobile dictionaries particularly monolingual ones on intermediate Cantonese EFL learners' word comprehension and word learning. The induced findings revealed that mobile dictionaries affected the participants' vocabulary knowledge positively. The former played a pivotal role in increasing learners' vocabulary repertoire in comparison to those who relied on the context only or learners who worked with the assistance of printed dictionaries. Their portability and easy access to intended words significantly facilitate learners' word comprehension especially

in reading context, and learning a considerable number of words as a result. Accordingly, this research underscores the crucial role that mobile dictionaries play in language learning particularly vocabulary learning. The results of this study tend to support the findings of Khodareza and Delvand (2016), and Tabrizi and Fard (2016) who reached the conclusion that learning the vocabulary of SL and/or FL via mobile dictionaries is more efficacious than through paper dictionaries.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that dictionaries are indispensable reference tools for learners in general and language learners in particular as they offer them with in-depth information about words espcially those that they are not familiar with; whether in their native language or any other one. In light of this, it is worthy to note that previously students were primarily relied on printed dictionaries to meet their learning needs. However, with the growing use of electronic tools and mobile devices in the educational milieu, the prevalence of traditional (printed) dictionaries has slowly declined; where many ED formats including mobile dictionaries appear as a result. This latter which can be available on- and/or off-line prove to be more efficacious than printed dictionaries in the sense that they offer additional services like audio feature through which users can listen how words are correctly pronounced by native speakers, in addition to their portability and quick access to words nature.

CHAPTER THREE

Field Investigation

CONTENTS

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the practical framework of this study, which seeks to reveal the views and attitudes of EFL learners towards the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension. In doing so, two data gathering tools have been used; a students' questionnaire as the primary tool and classroom observation as a back-up tool. Thereafter, this chapter presents the analyses and interpretations of the collected data, in order to answer the research questions and prove or disprove the research hypothesis. It concludes with some pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and some recommendations for further research.

3.1. Students' Questionnaire

3.1.1. Population and Sample of the Study

The sample upon which the research was based has been selected from Master One LMD students at the Department of Letters and English language, University of 8 mai 1945, Guelma, registered in the academic year 2018/2019. The reason behind selecting Master One students is related to the fact that they study advanced reading strategies as an independent module for a whole semester. Furthermore, Master One students have assignments in which they present almost a whole lecture orally, so they are supposed to read different materials which make them practice their reading strategies on one hand, and obtain information needed for their presentations on the other. In light of these reasons, a random sample composed of 100 students out of 143 students has been chosen. Thus it can be said that this sample would permit the researcher to generalize the results to the whole population.

3.1.2. Description of Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is principally designed on the basis of the elements discussed in the theoretical part. It is made up of 22 questions organized under four main sections, each section focuses on a particular element (Appendix A). Both closed and open-ended questions

are used in this questionnaire. The former is about answering by Yes/No or selecting answer from various pre-determined options and the latter allows the respondents to answer questions freely using their own words. In addition, follow-up questions are used to provide further justifications.

The first section includes ten closed questions (from Q_1 to Q_{10}). It tends to know students' opinions about the value, purpose, and the preferred way for reading. In addition to the factors that affect their comprehension along with strategies that help them overcome their comprehension difficulties. Participants are asked to justify their answers. The second one covers six questions (from Q_{11} to Q_{16}). It seeks to extract the preferred type of dictionaries students often use, and the main purpose behind using such dictionary type, in addition to identifying the best dictionary apps for English language learners. The third section consists of six questions (from Q_{16} to Q_{21}). It aims at finding students' attitudes towards the extent to which the use of mobile dictionaries in reading activities facilitates their comprehension. The fourth and last section contains only one open-ended question (Q_{22}) which gives students full freedom to add any comment/suggestion about the topic under investigation.

3.1.3. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is administered at the department of Letters and English Language, 8 mai 1945 University-Guelma, to Master One students during two days May 20th and May 21st, 2019. It is worth noting that the questionnaire was distributed with the presence of EFL teacher in a period of twenty (20) minutes and it was handed back in the same day. Impressively, students were interested in answering the questionnaire; because of the topic itself.

3.1.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.1.4.1. Analysis of Results and Findings from Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Reading Comprehension

Question One: How do you find the module of advanced reading strategies?

Table 3.1

Students' Attitudes towards the Module of Advanced Reading Strategies

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Very interesting	33	33
Interesting	45	45
Not interesting	22	22
Total	100	100

As it is shown in the table above, a considerable percentage of students (22%) argued that the module of *Advanced Reading Strategies* is not interesting; they justified that this is primarily due to the frequent absences of the teacher where they studied this module just for very few sessions. Whilst, the majority of them (45%) found it interesting and (33%) found the module very interesting. So, their justifications are summarized as follows:

- The module helps students to develop different strategies needed in improving their reading comprehension and overcoming the reading difficulties.

- It is enjoyable because of the teacher him/herself and his/her method of teaching and explaining the lesson.

- It is the first module that provides students with the opportunity to read various enjoyable texts selected by the teacher inside the classroom under his/her supervision.

- It offers master one students with many guidelines about how to read different, reliable, and relevant sources which they need next year as master two students when collecting data for their dissertation.

Question Two: Do you like to read in English?

Table 3.2

Students' appreciation of reading

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
A lot	52	52
A little	45	45
Not at all	3	3
Total	100	100

The aim of this question is to highlight to which degree students appreciate the reading skill (table 3.2). Surprisingly, more than half of students (52%) indicated that they like reading a lot; fracturing all the prevalent assumptions that students do not estimate reading very much. Forty five students (45%) selected that they like reading but a little. As a result, this implies that students are aware about the importance of reading in the development of language proficiency. Whereas, only (3%) of students claimed that they dislike reading. The participants' less appreciation towards reading may be due largely to the complexity of reading as a skill where achieving comprehension relies on different factors.

Question Three: How often do you read in English?

Table 3.3

Students' frequency of reading

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Frequency	21	21
Sometimes	67	67
Rarely	12	12
Total	100	100

This question was addressed to students on purpose, to affirm that they answered (Q_2) attentively. Factually, the obtained data from this question prove students' responses to the previous question. 21% of students declared that they read frequently, this denotes that they like to spend their time in reading which is one of their preferred hobbies, instead of wasting it in unprofitable activities. The majority of students (67%) indicated that they read only from time to time. This might mean that the high rate of reading estimation is not necessarily related to time, but to other factors such as motivation and/or willingness to read. Whereas, 12% of students reported that they read rarely, which may be due to either their lack of reading motivation, their unawareness of the importance of reading in enhancing learners' language proficiency, or simply they do not find what they want to read in English available.

Question Four: For which purpose do you often read? (Choose the most suitable one)

Table 3.4

The Purpose of Reading

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
To acquire new knowledge	21	21
To enrich your vocabulary knowledge	22	22
To fulfill academic activities (preparing for presentations)	25	25
To get pleasure	32	32
Other(s)	00	00
Total	100	100

In this question, students are asked to choose for which purpose they read. As it is displayed in table 3.4, twenty one students (21%) read to acquire knowledge. This indicates that reading is the primary source through which students can get plenty of information about topics they are not familiar with. Twenty-two students (22%) said that they read to enrich their vocabulary knowledge. This proves that reading is an effective way whereby students can learn countless number of vocabularies. A significant percentage of students (25%) declared that they read to fulfill their academic activities in general and preparing for presentations in particular. This indicates that students do not read unless they are asked or obliged to do so, or they can not find time for extra reading since they have very overloaded schedule. Whereas, 41% of respondents read to get pleasure, which means that reading is one of their favorite hobbies or they just prefer to read materials other than for educational purposes, such as: newspapers, magazines, and novels. No student opted for others which means that all students' purposes behind reading turn around the suggested options, or they are too lazy to write one.

Question Five: Do you prefer to read:

Table 3.5

Students' Types of Reading

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Inside the classroom (texts chosen by the teacher)	12	12
Outside the classroom (whatever you want)	88	88
Total	100	100

This question was formulated to see if students are extensive or intensive readers. The findings above show that the majority of students (88%) prefer to read outside the classroom. This implies that students are extensive readers, in the sense that they prefer to read whatever and whenever they want; instead of being restricted to reading texts selected by the teacher, inside the classroom. In contrast, the minority of students (12%) claimed that they prefer to read inside the classroom, may be because they like to read short texts to practice a particular strategy or achieve a specific aim. Thus, they are intensive readers.

Question Six: While reading, do you apply some reading strategies? (check the next question)

Table 3.6

The use of Reading Strategies

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Yes, always	37	37
Yes, sometimes	54	54
No, never	09	09
Total	100	100

The obtained data reveals that 37% of the entire sample opted for always. This means that students are strategic readers in the sense that they are aware of the importance of strategies in improving their reading comprehension. More than half of the sample (54%) declared that they use reading strategies but only from time to time, may be because they do not know when and where, or which strategy exactly they have to apply. A minority of students (09%) opted for *No*. This implies that those students are not aware that they apply one or some of these strategies; because it is not logical that students read without using at least the skimming and scanning strategies.

Question Seven: If yes, what are the main strategies do you often apply?

A: Skimming **B:** Scanning **C:** Activating and using background knowledge **D:** Predicting

E: Questioning **F:** Summarizing

Table 3.7

The Main Strategies Students Use

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
A	00	00
B	00	00
C	00	00
D	00	00
E	00	00
F	00	00
All of them	53	53
A+B	26	26
A+B+C	08	08
A+B+C+F	04	04
Total	91	91

This question was addressed to students who stated in the previous question (**Q₆**) that they use reading strategies while reading a particular text. Thus the sample of this question is (91%) which represent 91 students. In this question, students were allowed to opt for more than one answer. As it is presented in the previous table, no one opted for only one option. This means that students are aware that using only one strategy is not enough for achieving comprehension. As a result, the majority of students (53%) declared that they use all the aformentioned strategies, which means that they apply different strategies at different stages: before, during and after reading for gaining better understanding of the text. A considerable number of students (26%) stated that they use both skimming and scanning, may be because they prefer to check first if the text is relevant or not, then to read for a specific information. Eight students (08%) claimed that they use skimming and scanning in addition to activating background knowledge. This denotes that students prefer to relate what they know to what they read. Only four students (04%) declared that they use four strategies: skimming, scanning, background knowledge and summarizing may be because the latter help them to understand the main points only.

Question Eight: When dealing with a text in English language, do you face some difficulties that impair your comprehension?

Table 3.8

Students' Difficulties in Comprehension

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Yes	89	89
No	11	11
Total	100	100

As it is represented in the previous table, almost all students (89%) reported that they face some difficulties in understanding the reading texts. This indicates that comprehension is not an easy task that all students can achieve. Equally, these difficulties may lead students gradually to generate some negative feelings about reading, such as: de-motivation and frustration. Some students (11%) claimed that they have no difficulty in understanding the reading texts. This demonstrates that students are in a high level of English language proficiency, or that they practiced reading in English language for a long period of time.

Question Nine: If yes, what are they? (Choose the most dominant one)

Table 3.9

Students' Types of Comprehension Difficulties

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Limited vocabulary knowledge	29	29
Unfamiliarity with the topic	21	21
The complexity of the text (difficult words)	41	41
Inadequate use of effective reading strategies	09	09
Others	00	00
Total	89	89

This question is a support to the previous one. In this question, students who stated that they have difficulties in reading activities were asked to determine which kind of reading difficulty they frequently encounter. 29% of respondents claimed that their limited vocabulary knowledge is the primary factor that may impede their reading comprehension. This proves that vocabulary knowledge is a key element that students have to develop to enhance their reading comprehension. Whereas, 21% of students opted for unfamiliarity with the topic. This means that the more students are familiar with the topic of the text, the better they understand

it and vice versa. Only few students (09%) said that the inadequate use of reading strategies is the major type of difficulties that may hinder their comprehension; may be because they do not know where and when or which strategy they apply, or they make use of only few strategies. As for the majority of participants (41%), they indicated that the difficulty of the text at level of difficult words is the main reason behind their poor reading comprehension. This demonstrates that there are some difficulties related to students themselves while others to the text itself. No student opted for others, which means that all the significant difficulties that may students face turn around the suggested options.

Question Ten: Do you think that vocabulary knowledge is important in reading comprehension?

Table 3.10

Students' Attitudes towards the Importance of vocabulary knowledge in Reading Comprehension

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Yes	100	100
No	00	00
Total	100	100

According to the results that are presented in the previous Table 3.10, the whole sample (100%) equating 100 students agreed that vocabulary knowledge is an important element in reading comprehension. The majority of students (96%) provided justifications as answers to the following question (whatever your answer, please justify); except 04% of students who provided no justifications. Students' answers revolve around the following points:

- Complicated words in the text make students feel bored and stop reading.

- The more vocabularies students know, the better they understand the text.

- Poor vocabulary knowledge means poor reading comprehension.

- Large vocabulary knowledge allows students understand the text easily.

Section Two: Mobile Dictionaries

Question Eleven: Which electronic device do you often use in your learning?

Table 3.11

The Most Electronic Device Students Have and Use in their Learning

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Personal computer (PC)	12	12
A smart phone	87	87
A tablet	01	01
Total	100	100

According to the results that are shown in Table 3.11, 12% of respondents possess and use personal computer (PC) in their learning. This may indicate that those students find PC more practical when doing their researches and presentations; because of its large storage capacity and large screen size. Whereas, the majority of students (87%) stated that they prefer to use the smart phone in the process of their education. This implies that smart phones tend to replace PCs to some extent because of their high availability and portability, in addition to their small size making them more practical in use, or may be because students who are in the campus are usually obliged to use their phones instead of other electronic devices. Only one student (1%) opted for tablet. This suggests that s/he finds it advantageous in the sense that it combines some features of PCs, such as: large screen size, and slim and light-weight like smart phones. These findings prove that electronic devices have become supplementary and effective tools that students cannot learn without, nowadays.

Question Twelve: Do you use electronic dictionaries in your English language learning?

Table 3.12

Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Electronic Dictionaries in learning English Language

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Yes	99	99
No	00	00
Total	100	100

This question was addressed to students to explore their attitudes towards the use of electronic dictionaries. As it is displayed in Table 3.12, the entire sample (100%) declared that they use electronic dictionaries in their English language learning. This implies that electronic dictionaries tend to replace traditional ones as they are rapid and easy to use.

Question Thirteen: If yes, which one of those electronic dictionaries' types do you most often use?

Table 3.13

The Most Electronic Dictionary Type Students Often Use

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Hand-held/pocket electronic dictionaries	01	01
CD-ROM dictionaries	07	07
Internet/online dictionaries	26	26
Dictionaries applications on mobile devices	66	66
Total	100	100

The aim behind this question is to know which type of electronic dictionaries students use. The findings that are presented in Table 3.13 show that only one student (01%) use

pocket electronic dictionaries. This low percentage may be due to the lack of availability of this device and its expensive price in Algeria. Few students (07%) stated that they use CD-ROM dictionaries. Since CD-ROM can embrace only one or two dictionaries, this demonstrates that these students have a special dictionary type that they like to use. A considerable percentage of informants (26%) declared that they use online dictionaries, maybe because they have internet access (Wi-Fi, 3G and/or 4G) inside and outside the classroom, and/or use it to search for extra-information unavailable in other EDs types. While, the majority of students (66%) indicated that they use dictionary apps on their mobile devices, since this latter particularly smart phones are the most available tools in Algeria.

Question Fourteen: Which type of dictionaries do you most often use in your English learning?

Table 3.14

The Preferred Dictionary Type Students Often Use

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Printed dictionaries	06	06
Mobile dictionaries	94	94
Total	100	100

In attempt to detect what kind of dictionary students use, this question was formulated. Surprisingly, only few students (06%) claimed that they use printed dictionaries; instead the majority of them (94%) indicated that they use mobile dictionaries. This result demonstrates that mobile dictionaries tend to replace traditional paper dictionaries to a large extent. Students justify their answers as follows:

- Mobile dictionaries are portable and light-weight in the sense that students can use them anywhere and anytime.

- They are rapid and easy to use thus, save users' time.

- They allow students to learn how to pronounce words correctly.

- Paper dictionaries are always things that are prone to forgetfulness.

Question Fifteen: If your answer is **(b)**, what is your main purpose behind using mobile dictionaries?

Table 3.15

Purpose of Mobile Dictionaries Usage

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
To get the meaning of words	57	57
To check the right pronunciation of words	24	24
To check the right spelling of words	13	13
Total	94	94

Table 3.15 above demonstrates for which main purpose students use mobile dictionaries. 94% of the sample which equates 94 students who use mobile dictionaries responded to this question. More than half of participants (57%) declared that they use mobile dictionaries to get the meaning of words. While, twenty-eight students (24%) indicated that they use them to check the right pronunciation of words. The rest (13%) state that their main purpose behind mobile dictionaries usage is to check the right spelling of words. These findings show that the main purpose behind the use of mobile dictionaries varies from one student to another according to his/her learning abilities and needs. Equally, such findings highlight the importance of mobile dictionaries as reference tools in helping students learn different aspects of the language (semantics, phonology, etc).

Question Sixteen: According to you—as an EFL learner—what is the best mobile dictionary application that you use and find useful in your learning?

Table 3.16

Students' opinions about the Best Mobile Dictionary Application

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Bravolol (English-Arabic) dictionary app	04	04
Collins English dictionary app	02	02
Dictionary - WordWeb app	01	01
English dictionary-offline app	11	11
English to English dictionary offline	01	01
Golden Dictionary app	03	03
Google translate app	07	07
Merriam-Webster dictionary app	19	19
Oxford English dictionary app	12	12
Pocket thesaurus	01	01
Did not answer this question	39	39
Total	100	100

The aim of this question is to know students' opinions on the best dictionary app that they use and find useful in their learning. In light of this, students were given full freedom to name the dictionary app; instead of limiting them to a list of options, because it is not possible that the whole sample of 100 students use only one or two apps especially in light of the availability of countless dictionary apps on Google Play Store and Apple App Store. The results that are displayed in the Table 3.16 show that (39%) of respondents did not answered this question. This may be because students did not understood the question per se, they have

not responded to the research questionnaire seriously; since almost all students indicated previously that they use mobile dictionaries, or may be bcause they do not know what they are using. As for the majority of students (61%) who answered this question, their responses revolve around 10 dictionary apps; where Merriam-Webster dictionary app was named by the majority of participants (19%) as the best mobile dictionary app for English language learners.

Students' responses prove that they do not use the same dictionary app, maybe because each student uses the app that s/he finds useful in serving his/her needs and developing his/her language abilities on the basis of its features. All the aforementioned apps vary from monolingual to bilingual dictionaries. This also denotes that though master one students learn EFL for four years at least in the university, they are still influenced by their mother tongue through the use of both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries.

Section Three: Mobile Dictionaries and Reading Comprehension

Question Seventeen: While reading, do you use mobile dictionaries to check the meaning of ambiguous words?

Table 3.17

Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Mobile Dictionaries in Reading Activities

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Yes	94	94
No	06	06
Total	100	100

As it is shown in Table 3.17, the majority of students (94%) approved. This means that mobile dictionaries are assistant tools in learning the meaning and/or pronunciation of unfamiliar words that come across students when reading a particular text, which in turn help

them understand it. Whilst, only few students (6%) indicated that they do not use mobile dictionaries while reading, maybe because this percentage represents students who prefer the use of printed dictionaries, or they just like to deduce the meaning of words from the context, instead of depending on dictionaries.

Question Eighteen: How often do you use mobile dictionaries while you are reading?

Table 3.18

Students' Frequency of Mobile Dictionaries Usage in Reading Activities

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Always	49	49
Sometimes	32	36
Rarely	13	13
Never	06	06
Total	100	100

As it is demonstrated in Table 3.18, the majority of students (49%) opted for *always*, 32% of them for *sometimes*, and some students in ratio of (13%) stated that they use mobile dictionaries when practicing reading rarely. This highlights the importance of mobile dictionaries as reference tools in reading activities. Whereas, students (6%) who opted for *never* are those who depend either on their printed dictionaries or the contextual-guessing strategy.

Question Nineteen: What kind of mobile dictionaries do you use the most when looking for the meaning of unfamiliar words?

Table 3.19

The Type of Linguistic Mobile Dictionary Students Use

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Monolingual dictionary (English-English)	54	54
Bilingual dictionary (English-Arabic)	35	45
Both of them	17	17
Total	100	100

The aim of this question is to identify the linguistic mobile dictionary type students use. Interestingly, the entire sample answered this question even those who declared that they use printed dictionaries, maybe because they found themselves concerned. The results displayed in Table 3.19 present that more than half of informants (54%) use monolingual dictionaries. This implies that students find it more efficacious in developing their English vocabulary repertoire. Whereas, 23% of students indicated that they use bilingual dictionaries, maybe this is due to their weak vocabulary knowledge of English language and/or high influence of the mother tongue. However, 17% of students stated that they prefer to use both of them. This shows that when students find it difficult to understand the meaning of words in English, they will resort to its equivalent via the use of bilingual dictionaries and vice versa.

Question Twenty: When looking for the synonym/meaning of an unknown word in text reading, and the dictionary provides more than one word/explanation, how can you select the appropriate choice?

Table 3.20

Procedure of Selecting the Meaning of a Word Based on the Choices Provided by the Mobile Dictionary

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
Relate the meaning to the context and decide if it fits	89	89
Choose the first option in the list	05	05
Others	00	00
Total	94	94

The aim of this question is to know what students exactly do when a mobile dictionary provides them with a list of meanings of the search word. 06% of respondents who indicated in (Q_{14}) that they prefer to use printed dictionaries instead of mobile dictionaries have not answered this question. Thus, the overall sample of this question (94%) includes only those who responded to it. The majority of participants (89%) indicated that they relate the meaning of the word to the context, then decide its suitability. This is a reasonable answer, because not all provided options are relevant to a particular context. This implies that students are aware of the importance of both mobile dictionaries and contextual-guessing strategy. The minority of students (05%) said that they select the first option provided by mobile dictionary. This indicates that students ignore the importance of context in understanding reading text, or too lazy to check the suitability of all proposed explanations.

Question Twenty One: As a foreign language learner, to what extent do Mobile dictionaries facilitate your reading comprehension?

Table 3.21

The Significance of Mobile Dictionaries in Facilitating Reading Comprehension

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
A lot	63	63
A little bit	31	31
No help	00	00
Total	94	94

This question sheds light on students' views about the extent to which mobile dictionaries can facilitate their reading comprehension. Similar to the previous question (**Q₂₀**), only students who use mobile dictionaries responded to the current question. The majority of students (63%) opted for *a lot*, and 31% of them claimed that mobile dictionaries facilitate reading comprehension to a lesser degree. While no student opted for *No help*. This result demonstrates that mobile dictionaries are important reference tools that facilitate EFL students' reading comprehension to a great extent, especially when meaning is related to context.

Section Four: Further Suggestions

Question Twenty Two: Please feel free to add any further comment or suggestion about the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension.

Table 3.22

Further Comments and Suggestions

Responses	Participants	Percentage (%)
No comment and/or suggestion	54	54
Interesting topic, good luck	13	13
Provide different comments and suggestions	33	33
Total	100	100

In this question, more than half of the total sample (54%) equating 54 students did not answer, while the rest (46%) did. Among those who answered, (13%) that is 13 students commented that it is an interesting topic wishing the researcher good luck in carrying out the work, and a significant percentage of students (33%) (33 out of 100) added some comments and suggestions about the use of mobile dictionaries, and its relation to language and reading comprehension. The answers are presented as follows:

- The use of mobile dictionaries help in learning the meaning and translation of words in easy and rapid way as it also allows students to hear the pronunciation of words and it is much better than the traditional printed dictionaries which are typically a large volume and impractical in use.

- Mobile dictionaries are advantageous in learning synonyms and antonyms of words which, therefore enlarging students' vocabulary repertoire.

- Mobile dictionaries are easy to access and carry, where students can install many and many dictionary apps in one device only.

- Offline mobile dictionary apps are the first apps any EFL learner need to install in his/her device as it allows him/her to access information about words inside the classroom or no matter where with no need to internet connectivity.

- There is no need to prioritize mobile dictionaries on the expense of printed dictionaries and vice versa, each type has its own advantages. In terms of quality and quantity, printed dictionaries are better but in terms of accessibility and speed to information mobile dictionaries are better.

- Nowadays, it has become impossible to find an EFL learner who has a smart phone without a dictionary app.

- Students may forget to bring their pocket dictionaries but they cannot go out without their smart phones.

- Students and teachers have to take the use of mobile dictionaries into a serious account because its use is among the best ways of independent learning.

- The use of mobile dictionaries is precisely significant in facilitating EFL students' reading comprehension as they are easy and save the time of readers in checking the meaning of unknown words.

- Students should learn the basic skills of using mobile dictionaries because some dictionary apps are difficult to use.

- Mobile dictionaries are effective tools in EFL learning, but the over use of it makes learners lazy and dependable.

- Students should not rely heavily on mobile dictionaries because the contextual-guessing strategy may be overlooked as a result.

- Reading is an important skill in mastering English language, yet, it is neglected at the department of English of Guelma University when compared to the other

three skills. Thus, s/he suggested that advanced reading strategies module should be devoted more time and attention, and taught from first year.

Overall, it seems from the above comments and suggestions that these informants (33%) appreciate the role of mobile dictionaries and its importance in facilitating the EFL learning process in general, and enrich students' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension in particular. More importantly, they are aware about the drawbacks of mobile dictionaries when it is used frequently. Accordingly, they show awareness about the importance of contextual-guessing strategy.

3.1.4.2. Summary of Results and Findings from Students' Questionnaire

Section one which is about reading comprehension revealed that the majority of students appreciate reading and find it beneficial in achieving their educational and personal purposes. Based on the latter, almost all students identified themselves as extensive readers; because they find themselves more comfortable when reading whatever and whenever they want. In terms of complexity, the majority of students claimed that they encounter some reading difficulties that hinder their comprehension. The complexity of the text has been identified as the significant problem the majority of students face. As a result, all students considered vocabulary knowledge as key element students should develop to enhance their reading comprehension. In attempt to overcome their reading difficulties, more than half of students indicated that they use reading strategies, which proves that students are aware of the importance of reading strategies in facilitating reading comprehension.

The findings of the second section showed that all students use electronic dictionaries in general and the majority of them use dictionary apps installed on their mobile devices in particular. This is not a surprise, since mobile devices particularly smart phones are the most available devices in Algeria. In comparison between mobile dictionaries and printed ones, almost all the students pointed out that they prefer to use mobile dictionaries because of its

portability and accessibility. Additionally, the majority of students stated that they use their mobile dictionaries to get the meaning of words and its pronunciation. Concerning the type of dictionary apps, Merriam-Webster was identified as the most used and effective dictionary app in English language learning.

The third section covers students' opinions on the role played by mobile dictionaries as supplementary tools in facilitating their reading comprehension. Based on the obtained data, the majority of students asserted that they use mobile dictionaries while reading. Additionally, more than half of them stated that they prefer to use monolingual dictionaries rather than bilingual ones, which suggests that they like to enlarge their vocabulary in English language. When asked about the extent to which mobile dictionaries facilitate their reading comprehension, almost all students acknowledged this fact, especially when the context is taken into consideration.

3.2. Classroom Observation

3.2.1. Sample Choice

In the current study, the target population is Master One LMD students at the Department of Letters and English language, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma, registered in the academic year 2018/2019. The reason behind choosing this sample and not any other level in the department lies in the fact that, Master One students study advanced reading strategies as an independent module twice a week, theoretically and practically for a whole semester; where they are supposed to read significant amount of texts. Since they have different teachers for this module, the entire population of 143 master one students that is divided into five groups was observed and used as a sample.

3.2.2. Description of the Observation

This research was also conducted depending on a classroom observation as a supportive tool. This latter was used to enrich and reinforce the results obtained from the

students' questionnaire. On this basis, Master One students were observed during their advanced reading strategies sessions, to detect the most used reading comprehension strategies on one hand, and to check whether they use their mobile dictionaries while reading on the other hand.

The classroom observation was done during the first semester, because the second semester was devoted to studying advanced writing strategies. The whole population of 143 master one students that are divided into five groups was observed, because they have three different teachers. After asking for permission from teachers of advanced reading strategies module, each group was observed for two successive sessions of 90 minutes. The observation lasted for one week from 17th February to 25th February, 2019. The following table summarizes the timing, sessions, and dates of the observation.

Table 3.23

The Key Elements of the Observation

Skill	Level	Groups	Date	Time
Reading	Master one students at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma	01	17/02/2019	14:00-15:30
		02	17/02/2019	12:30-14:00
		03	24/02/2019	08:00-09:30
		04	25/02/2019	08:00-09:30
		05	20/02/2019	11:00-12:30

This study used a structured observation, meaning that all elements to be observed and taken into consideration to fulfill the aforementioned objectives were planned in advance. These items are organized in an observation checklist (see Appendix B) which is composed of two sections. The first one includes an introduction which covers the general information such as the name of the observer and teacher, the class/group to be observed, and time and date.

The second section embraces the main points that students and/or teachers may use or go through before, during, and after the activity of reading.

Concerning the materials, the actual classroom observation was based on a text entitled "*City Girl*" (Appendix C) which was taken from web page English for Everyone-Short Stories. The text is followed by fourteen (14) questions, almost all of which are multiple choice questions. It is important to note that the text used was selected by the researcher and given to the three teachers, who were in charge of these five classes to distribute it to their students during the practical session, because students were accustomed to such procedures. So, this makes the reading activity and answering the questions as spontaneous as possible. The reason behind selecting the same text for the five groups lies in the fact that one text can serve the purposes of this observation better, because using different texts chosen by teachers may lead to different interpretations, which in turn may mislead the process of this study.

3.2.3. Analysis of the Results and Findings

With no doubt, objectivity is the key element in conducting any academic work. For promoting the objectivity of this research, it is important to note that because of some misunderstanding, the classroom observation was obliged to be excluded from this research and not to taken its findings into consideration in confirming or rejecting the research hypotheses or answering the research questions. The primary and only reason behind excluding the follow-up tool was due to master one students and teachers' misunderstanding. Students were misguided by their teachers during the the practical sessions which led the whole observation in the wrong direction.

From the beginning, this observation was designed as non-participant observation, that is to say, the researcher attend sessions just as a passive participant and indirect observer without informing students with the purpose of the study to collect more spontaneous data, if students really use mobile dictionaries in their reading activities inside the classroom or not.

However, inadvertently teachers informed students of the aim of the investigation before the observation took place, and this contradicts with the criteria of structured and non-participant observation because the spontaneity from this classroom observation was not achieved. Thus the researcher was obliged to denpend only on the findings of the questionnaire.

Finally yet importantly, one should note that neither teachers nor students are blamed for the failure of the classroom observation because all the misunderstandings occurred unintentionally. Honestly speaking, both teachers and students were cooperating willingly. Concerning teachers, despite the fact that they had very overloaded schedule, they devoted some of their time to read the selected text and prepare additional questions to create an interactional atmosphere inside the classroom. As for students, they were highly motivated to take part in this observation and answer the questions. Accordingly, the researcher is extremely grateful for their participation and help.

Conclusion:

This practical chapter of the study is based on the analysis of students' questionnaire. This data gathering tool, along with the theoretical part, helped in answering the research questions and confirming its hypothesis. The findings obtained from the analysis of the students' questionnaire revealed that the students have positive attitudes towards the use of mobile dictionaries in learning EFL in general, and enhancing reading comprehension in particular. Because of some reading comprehension difficulties they face, almost all students find the use of mobile dictionaries as supplementary tools useful in facilitating their reading comprehension, as it allows them to get the meaning of difficult words easily and rapidly.

3.3. Pedagogical Implications

The retrieved data from this study have some implications for enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension. These implications were drawn from the analyses and interpretations of the findings yielded by students' questionnaire, and are addressed for the university, teachers, as well as learners:

3.3.1. For the University

In point of fact, reading does not receive due attention or at least enough time like the three other skills at the department of English, University of Guelma. From the first year, students have the apportunity to study the main strategies on how to write effectively and accurately through written expression module. Likewise, they have the apportunity to study how to speak appropriately and fluently through oral expression module. In contrast, reading which is regarded another key in developing students' language proficiency is not given its own module for first, second, and third year students who are really in need for instructions and strategies on how to read smoothly and effectively for achieving better understanding of reading materials. According to its importance, reading should be devoted more priority and taught from first year.

3.3.2. For Teachers

- Since the aim of reading shapes the way of reading, teachers should not ask students to read just for the sake of reading, rather they should set some purposes for reading tasks, which in turn make them more interesting in its achievement.
- Teachers should direct their students' awareness towards the benefits of reading comprehension strategies in overcoming their reading comprehension difficulties.

- There are many cases where students really need to use their mobile dictionaries inside the classroom; yet, some teachers do not allow their students to use their mobile devices (smartphones) inside the classroom because they think that its usage may distract students' attention. However, as far as it is used for learning purposes, teachers should allow and support the use of mobile devices in general because it is the era of technology, and the use of mobile dictionaries inside classroom in particular.

- There are many mobile dictionary apps that have different interfaces and different features that learners may ignore. As result, teachers should take some responsibility and provide a guided use of mobile dictionaries.

3.3.3. For Students

- Students should value the importance of reading skill as one of the four pillars that develop language proficiency.

- Students should read as much materials as possible inside and outside the classroom to gain more vocabularies that in turn facilitate their reading comprehension.

- Students should read easy texts that are convenient to their level, instead of reading difficult materials which may lead them to generate negative feelings towards reading like de-motivation and frustration.

- Results obtained from students' questionnaire revealed that mobile dictionaries are efficacious tools in facilitating students' reading comprehension; yet, this does not mean that contextual-guessing strategy is totally neglected. Therefore, for ensuring better understanding of reading texts, students should relate the meanings provided by mobile dictionaries to the context and select the appropriate one.

- EFL students should be trained and/or guided on the effective use of mobile dictionaries apps to take advantages of all its features.

3.4. Limitations of the Study

To promote the objectivity of this research, it is important to mention that the present study faced some setbacks which prevented its adequate fulfillment. These constraints are presented as follows:

- Theoretically speaking, the unavailability of authentic materials such as books and articles was the major barrier that prevented the researcher from collecting valuable background information.

- Practically speaking, the exclusion of the classroom observation and not taking its results into account impair the appropriate accomplishment of the research because it was the only way to check students' answers in the questionnaire about the topic of this research.

- As far as limitations are concerned, time undoubtedly, was one of the major obstacles that faced the process of the study. The time allotted for conducting the study was very limited. Thus, if it was quite larger than it was, the researcher would have the opportunity to make use of other data gathering tool as experiment or think aloud protocol to investigate the extent to which the use of mobile dictionaries facilitate reading comprehension.

3.5. Suggestions for Future Research

The current research has offered insights about students' views, perceptions, and attitudes concerning the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension. Both the findings and limitations identified in this study allow the researcher to suggest some possible areas for future research:

- Future empirical studies on the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension are needed.

- A comparative investigation of the effect of mobile dictionaries and printed dictionaries use in reading comprehension is required.

- A researcher can conduct an experimental study in which s/he investigates the impact of particular mobile dictionary app (Oxford, Merriam-Webster, Cambridge, etc) on learning EFL.

- Further research is needed to scrutinize the effect of mobile dictionaries on EFL learners' vocabulary learning.

- Equally important, research is also needed to examine the effect of mobile dictionaries on EFL students' pronunciation.

- Further research needs to be done to find whether the use of mobile dictionaries inside EFL classes would increase students' motivation.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The present research is carried out for the sake of exploring students' views, perceptions, and attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension. To this end, the study goes through two main phases. The first phase includes the two theoretical chapters that review the literature with reference to reading comprehension and mobile dictionaries respectively; whereas the second phase presents the practical part.

Theoretically, the first chapter is devoted to providing a general overview of reading comprehension. It is made up of ten big titles that discuss the definition of both reading and reading comprehension, the importance of reading, its purposes, its types, levels of comprehension, difficulties of reading comprehension, and the role of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension; in addition to the main strategies that are used to overcome students' reading comprehension difficulties.

The second chapter is concerned with mobile dictionaries. It consists of two sections. The first one tackles the notion of mobile learning, its definition, its characteristics, and mobile applications; the second section discusses the concept of dictionaries, its types, mobile dictionaries as a type of EDs, its characteristics, and the best mobile dictionary apps for EFL learners. In order to achieve the above-mentioned aim, the quantitative descriptive method is adopted through two different tools; a classroom observation and questionnaire. The questionnaire is administered to 100 Master One LMD students at the Department of English, 8 mai 1945 University of Guelma. All the analyses and interpretations from these tools are presented in the third chapter.

Based on the retrieved data from the students' questionnaire, it is indicated that students show positive attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in reading comprehension. They agree that the use of mobile dictionaries facilitates to some extent their

understanding of the reading materials. Therefore, it can be concluded that the research hypothesis set at the beginning of this dissertation is confirmed.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

We would be deeply grateful if you fill in this questionnaire which intends to provide a comprehensive data about EFL students' attitudes towards the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension. Your answers will be kept anonymous and will be used only for research purposes.

Please put a tick (√) in the appropriate box, or provide a full answer where it is needed.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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2018/2019

Section One: Reading Comprehension

Q$_1$: How do you find the module of advanced reading strategies?

a- Very interesting ☐

b- Interesting ☐

c- Not interesting ☐

Whatever your answer is, please justify…………………………………………………………...

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Q$_2$: Do you like to read in English?

a- A lot ☐

b- A little ☐

c- Not at all ☐

Q$_3$: How often do you read in English?

a- Frequently ☐

b- Sometimes ☐

c- Rarely ☐

Q$_4$: For which purpose do you often read? (choose the most suitable one)

a- To acquire new knowledge ☐

b- To enrich your vocabulary knowledge ☐

c- To fulfill your academic activities (to prepare for your presentations) ☐

d- To get pleasure ☐

Others, please specify……………………………………………………………………………...

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Q₅: Do you prefer to read:

a- Inside the classroom, texts that your teacher chooses ☐

b- Outside the classroom, whatever you want ☐

Q₆: While reading, do you apply some of reading strategies? (check the next question)

a- Yes, always ☐

 b- Yes, sometimes ☐

c- No, never ☐

Q₇: If yes, what are the main strategies you often apply? (you can choose more than one answer)

a- Skimming (quick reading for general understanding) ☐

b- Scanning (looking for specific information) ☐

c- Activating and Using Background Knowledge (relate what you read with what you already know) ☐

d- Predicting (expect what may come next) ☐

e- Questioning (asking questions before, during, and after reading) ☐

f- Summarizing (recapitulate the main ideas) ☐

g- All of them ☐

Q₈: When dealing with a text, do you face some difficulties that impair your comprehension?

a- Yes ☐

b- No ☐

Q₉: If yes, what are they?

a- Limited vocabulary knowledge ☐

b- Unfamiliarity with the topic ☐

c- The complexity of the text (difficult words) ☐

d- Inadequate use of effective reading strategies ☐

Others, please specify……………………………………………………………………………...

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Q₁₀: Do you think that vocabulary knowledge is important in reading comprehension?

a- Yes ☐

b- No ☐

Whatever your answer is, please justify…………………………………………………………

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Section Two: Mobile Dictionaries

Q₁₁: Which electronic device do you possess, and often use in your learning?

a- Personal computer (PC) ☐

b- A smart phone ☐

c- A tablet ☐

Q₁₂: Do you use electronic dictionaries in your English language learning?

a- Yes ☐

b- No ☐

Q₁₃: If yes, which of these electronic dictionary types do you most often use?

a- Hand-held/pocket electronic dictionaries ☐

b- Dictionaries on CD-ROM ☐

c- Dictionaries on internet (online dictionaries) ☐

d- Dictionary applications on mobile devices ☐

Q₁₄: Which type of dictionaries do you most often use in your English learning?

a- Printed dictionaries ☐

b- Mobile dictionaries ☐

Whatever your answer is, please justify….………………………………………………..

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Q₁₅: If your answer is **(b)**, what is your main purpose behind using mobile dictionaries?

a- To get the meaning of words

b- To check the right pronunciation of words

c- To check the right spelling of words

Q₁₆: According to you—as an EFL learner—what is the best mobile dictionary application that you use and find useful in your learning?

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Section Three: The Role of Mobile Dictionaries in Facilitating Reading Comprehension

Q₁₇: While reading, do you use mobile dictionaries to check the meaning of ambiguous words?

a- Yes

b- No

Q₁₈: How often do you use mobile dictionaries while you are reading?

a- Always

b- Sometimes

c- Rarely

d- Never

Q₁₉: What kind of mobile dictionaries do you use the most when looking for the meaning of unfamiliar words?

a- Monolingual dictionaries (English-English)

b- Bilingual dictionaries (English-Arabic)

c- Both of them

Q₂₀: When looking for the synonym/meaning of an unknown word in text reading, and the dictionary provides more than one word/explanation, how can you select the appropriate choice?

a- Relate the meaning to the context and decide if it fits

b- Choose the first option in the list.

Others, please specify……………………………………………………………………

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Q₂₁: As a foreign language learner, to what extent do mobile dictionaries facilitate your reading comprehension?

a- A lot

b- A little bit

c- No help

Whatever your answer is, please justify……………………………………………………

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Section Four: Further Suggestions

Q₂₂: Please feel free to add any further comment or suggestion about the role of mobile dictionaries in facilitating reading comprehension…………………………………………...

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Thank you for tour cooperation

(Appendix B)

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Teacher: **Date:**

Observer: **Time:**

Class observed: **Departement:**

Section	Items	Observed		Examples/
		Yes	**No**	**Comments**
Reading Comprehension and Mobile dictionaries	1. The teacher gives students specific time for reading.			
	2. Students read silently.			
	3. After reading the text, the teacher asks some questions to check students' reading comprehension.			
	4. Students comprehend the text.			
	5. Students use reading comprehension strategies.			

	6. Most reading comprehension strategies that students use:
	
	    a. Skimming
	    b. Scanning
	    c. Activating and Using Background Knowledge
	    d. Predicting
	    e. Questioning
	    f. Summaarizing			

	7. Students find difficulty in understanding some terms within the text.			
	8. Students use mobile dictionaries to get the meaning of unknown words secretly.			
	9. The teacher allows students to use mobile dictionaries.			

Further Notes: …………………………………………………………………………………

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TEXT OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Read the story, then answer the questions:

"City Girl"

I am a city girl at heart. I've never milked a cow – never wanted to.

I was shocked when I attended my first "pig pickin" after my husband and I moved to North Carolina from Boston. I had to **avert** my eyes from the huge pig, skin and head still on, splayed open across an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise and fitted with hinges so it opened and closed. This, I later learned, was called a "pig cooker." Part of the pig's insides were chopped up in a pan beside it and referred to as "barbecue." Seeing all of this did not improve my appetite.

"Y'all in thuh country now, gul," the host told me happily, apparently thrilled to be the one to indoctrinate me into country living.

When, at 8 months pregnant, I volunteered to chaperone my son's strawberrypicking field trip, the other mothers looked at me strangely. I thought strawberries grew on tall bushes, not low to the ground. All that squatting sent me into early labor.

You should keep these incidents in mind in order to understand my attitude when I heard a "huge hurricane" was headed toward our town. I thought back to the snowstorms forecast during my days growing up in Philadelphia. The "20 inches" predicted by the weatherman never seemed to **materialize.**

The local newspaper ran a long checklist of things townspeople should get to prepare for the hurricane. My neighbor, Wayne, aware that I was new to town, made a point of giving me a copy of the list. I took a **cursory** glance and thought nothing more of it.

While my neighbors were running around taping their windows, buying fresh batteries, and prepping their generators, I was, quite **literally**, sitting in my glass house playing with the kids on the floor.

The rains started at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. To my amazement, this was exactly what the weatherman had predicted.

These were no ordinary rains, either. From my glass living room, I could no longer see the front lawn or the trees. The rain was as thick as a woolen curtain. By nightfall, my husband's car had begun to float out of the driveway. The water started insidiously creeping up our front steps, overturning potted plants and benches in its wake.

"This is unbelievable!" I yelled. I reached for the phone to dial Wayne. He had been born and raised in these parts; surely he would know what to do.

"Wayne," I said worriedly into the receiver. "The water is coming up our front steps. It's almost to our door!"

"Ours, too," he said, quite calmly, I thought, given the circumstances.

"What should I do?" "Put out your sandbags. It will keep the water out as long as it doesn't get too high."

"Sandbags ?"

"You didn't get any?" he asked in disbelief. "They were on the list."

No, I hadn't.

Questions:

1) What other title might fit this passage best?

A. "An Urban Attitude"

B. "Learning Hurricanes"

C. "Picking Strawberries"

D. "Snow Storms that Don't Come"

2) What seems to be the author's main purpose in the first four paragraphs of this passage?

A. to let the reader know that the narrator went into early labor

B. to let the reader know that the narrator does not like barbecue

C. to let the reader know that the narrator is unfamiliar with country life

D. to let the reader know that the narrator wants to move back to Boston

3) "I had to avert my eyes from the huge pig, skin and head still on, splayed open across half of an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise." Which of the following is the best way to rewrite the above sentence (from paragraph 2) while keeping its original meaning as used in the story?

A. I had to open my eyes to the huge pig, skin and head on, splayed open across an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise."

B. I had to direct my eyes towards the huge pig, skin and head on, splayed open across an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise.

C. I had to turn my eyes away from the huge pig, skin and head on, splayed open across an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise.

D. I had to fix my eyes upon the huge pig, skin and head on, splayed open across an oil drum that had been sawed in half lengthwise.

4) As used in paragraph 5, which is the best definition for materialize?

A. to be false B. to increase in size

C. to become actual or real

D. to be concerned with consumer goods.

5) Which literary term best applies to the following quote: "Y'all in thuh country now, gul."

A. yarn, meaning an improbable tale

B. trait, characterized as a habit or tendency in one's personality

C. caprice, characterized as expressing fanciful or odd notions

D. vernacular, meaning the native language of people in a particular geographical area

6) Which best describes the narrator's attitude in this passage?

A. disdainful of rural life

B. unaware of country ways

C. anxious to get back to Boston

D. wishful for her children to grow up in the city

7) As used in the middle of the story, which is the best antonym for cursory?

A. angry and willful

B. fast and intelligent

C. slow and deliberate

D. slow and superficial

8) What does it mean to literally do something?

A. to think about doing something

B. to do something exactly as said

C. to do something and regret it later

D. to do something with a bad attitude

9) What message does the author convey by having the narrator wait out the storm in a glass room?

A. It signifies how vulnerable she is.

B. It signifies the narrator's nontraditional tastes.

C. It lets the reader know that she has not taped up her windows.

D. It lets the reader know she can see everything that's going on.

10) Which best describes the use of woolen curtain in this passage?

A. simile, meaning the direct comparison of two different things using "like" or "as"

B. comic relief, meaning it offers humor in a tense situation.

C. personification, meaning something described as if it were human.

D. satire, meaning it ridicules the weakness of an institution.

11) If the story were to continue, what might reasonably happen next?

I. Water might get into the house.

II. The narrator might flee to Wayne's house for safety.

III. The narrator might drive back to the store to get sandbags.

A. I only

B. I and II

C. II and III

D. I, II, and III

12) Which lesson does the narrator most likely learn during the hurricane?

A. The early bird catches the worm.

B. Marry in haste and repent at leisure.

C. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

D. Actions speak louder than words.

13) How might the narrator have been better able to deal with her immediate problem?

A. She could have taped her windows.

B. She could have replaced the old batteries in her appliances.

C. She could have prepped her generator.

D. She could have purchased the items from the hurricane list.

14) Which do you like better, the country or the city? Why?

Résumé

Les apprenants d'une langue étrangère ont tendance à utiliser tous les moyens possibles pendant le processus de lecture pour obtenir plus d'informations, enrichir le vocabulaire et plus important encore, comprendre les matériaux de lecture facilement et efficacement.

La présente étude cherche à connaître le point de vue des apprenants de la langue Anglaise comme langue étrangère sur le rôle des dictionnaires installés sur les téléphones intelligents pour comprendre les textes lus. A cette fin, elle adopte la méthode descriptive comprenant des éléments quantitatifs et qualitatifs. Un questionnaire et une observation en classe ont été conçus pour collecter les données requises. Le questionnaire (N=100) a été adressé aux étudiants en master, un département d'anglais de l'université 8 mai 1945, Guelma. Les données recueillies confirment l'hypothèse principale, selon laquelle les étudiants de la langue anglaise comme langue étrangère ont une attitude positive à l'égard du rôle des dictionnaires installés sur les téléphones intelligents pour faciliter la compréhension de la lecture. Ainsi, cette recherche soutient l'utilisation de dictionnaires installés sur les téléphones mobiles en tant qu'outils complémentaires, pour surmonter les difficultés de compréhension de la lecture des étudiants au niveau des mots ambiguës. L'étude se termine par la proposition de quelques plans pédagogiques qui ouvrent la voie à de futures études.

Mots clés: compréhension de la lecture, dictionnaires installés sur les mobiles, les apprenants de (ALE).

الملخص

يميل متعلمي اللغة الأجنبية إلى استخدام أي وسيلة ممكنة خلال عملية القراءة للحصول على مزيد من المعلومات، معرفة المزيد من المفردات، والأهم من ذلك، فهم مواد القراءة المتوفرة بسهولة وفعالية. تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة آراء متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تجاه دور القواميس المثبة على الهواتف الذكية في فهم النصوص المقروءة. وتحقيقا لهذه الغاية، يتبنى البحث الحالي الطريقة الوصفية التي تتضمن عناصر كمية ونوعية. تم تصميم استبيان و ملاحظة صَفِّية لجمع البيانات المطلوبة. تم توجيه الإستبيان لطلاب الماستر (عدد=100)، بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية، بجامعة 8 ماي 1945، قالمة. تؤكد البيانات المجمعة الفرضية الرئيسية و التي تشير أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لديهم مواقف إيجابية تجاه دور القواميس المثبة على الهواتف الذكية في تسهيل القراءة الإستيعابية. وبالتالي، يدعم البحث الحالي إستخدام القواميس المثبة على الهواتف النقالة كأدات تكميلية للتغلب على صعوبات فهم القراءة لدى الطلاب. و تختم الدراسة باقتراح بعض الخطط البيداغوجية التي تمهد الطريق لدراسات مستقبلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القراءة الإستيعابية، القواميس المثبة على الهواتف النقالة، متعلمي (إ ل أ).