



**University of Benghazi
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**Investigating Reading Comprehension among
EFL Libyan Students: A Case Study of the
First-Semester Students in the Department of
English at the Faculty of Education at the
University of Benghazi**

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Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in
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Declaration

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Dedication

To my parents and my family, your love and sacrifices have made this achievement possible.

Hana Mahmoud Hadaga

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Table of Contents

Contents	page
Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgments	II
Table of contents.....	III
List of Tables.....	VII
List of Figures.....	VII
List of Abbreviations.....	VIII
Abstract.....	IX
Chapter One: Background to the Study	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Rationale of the Study	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem	3
1.4 Aims of the Study	5
1.5 Research Questions.....	5
1.6 Significant of the Study	6
1.7 Scope of the study.....	6
1.8 Context of the Study	7
1.8.1 EFL Presentation in Libya	9
1.8.2 EFL Textbooks in Libya	11
1.8.3 EFL Teaching Methods in Libya	16
1.8.4 EFL Classrooms in Libya	19
1.8.5 The Educational System in Libya	24
1.8.6 Higher Education in Libya	26
1.9 Definition of Terms	27
1.10 Organization of Dissertation	29
Chapter Two: Literature Review	31
2.1 Introduction	31
2.2 Defining Reading Comprehension	31
2.2.1 Processes of Reading Comprehension	36
2.3 Importance of Reading.	40
2.4 Types of Reading.....	42
2.5 Purposes for Reading	43
2.6 Aspects of Reading	45

2.6.1 Phonemic Awareness	45
2.6.2 Phonics Awareness	45
2.6.3 Understanding Vocabulary	46
2.6.4 Making Inferences.....	49
2.6.5 Using Background Knowledge	49
2.7 Characteristics of Successful and Unsuccessful Readers	53
2.8 Strategies of Reading	54
2.8.1 Skimming and Scanning	55
2.8.2 Metacognitive Strategies	58
2.9 The Place of Reading in Language Teaching and Learning.....	61
2.10 Key Theories for Teaching and Learning Reading	62
2.10.1 The Behaviorism	64
2.10.2 The Cognitivism	67
2.10.3 Skill-Based and Performance-Based Theory	70
2.10.4 The Interactional Theory	72
2.10.5 The Constructivism	74
2.10.5.1 The Vygotskian Theory	76
2.11 Approaches of Teaching Reading	80
2.11.1 Teacher-Centered Approach	81
2.11.1.1 Methods of Teacher-Centered Approach.....	83
2.11.1.1.1 The Grammar Translation Method: A Brief Background	83
2.11.1.1.2 The Direct Method: A Brief Background	87
2.11.1.1.3 The Audio-Lingual Method: A Brief Background	89
2.11.2 Learner-Centered Approach.....	94
2.11.2.1 Learner-Centered Teaching Methods	96
2.11.2.2 Practical Consideration of the Learner-Centered Approach	99
2.11.2.3 The Implementation of the Learner-Centered Approach in Language Classrooms.....	103
2.12 Stages of Teaching Reading	106
Summary of the Chapter	109
Chapter Three: Methodology	111
3.1 Introduction.....	111
3.2 Setting of the Study.....	111
3.3 Population and Samples of the Study	116
3.4 Methodology of the Study.....	117

3.4.1 Research Strategy	119
3.4.2 Research Approach	120
3.4.2.1 Research Paradigm	120
3.4.2.2 Research Design	123
3.4.2.3 Research Methods	124
3.4.2.3.1 Quantitative Research Methods: A Questionnaire	125
3.4.2.3.2 Quantitative Method: An Experiment	133
3.4.2.3.2.1 Design and Participants of Experiment	133
3.4.2.3.2.2 Materials of the Experiment	135
3.4.2.3.2.3 Procedures of the Experiment	136
3.4.2.3.2.4 The Pre-Test Variable.....	137
3.4.2.3.2.5 The Treatment Variable	137
3.4.2.3.2.5.1 A Teacher-Centered Lesson Plan.....	139
3.4.2.3.2.5.2 A Learner-Centered Lesson Plan	140
3.4.2.3.2.5.3 Classroom Management	157
3.4.2.3.2.4 The Post-Test Variable	159
3.4.2.3.2.5 Data Analysis of the Pre-Test and Post-test	159
3.5 Ethical Considerations	160
Summary of the Chapter	160
Chapter Four: Data Analysis, Results, and Discussions.....	161
4.1 Introduction	161
4.2 Data Analysis and Results of the Questionnaire	161
4.2.1 Discussion of the Questionnaire Results	162
4.3 Data Analysis and Results of the Pre-Test	167
4.3.1 Reliability of the Scale.....	167
4.3.2 Discussion of the Pre-Test Results.	167
4.4 Data Analysis and Results of the Experiment	169
4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Experiment.....	170
4.4.2 Discussion of the Experiment Results	171
4.4.3 A Percentage-Based Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results	171
Summary of the Chapter	173
Chapter Five: Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	174
5.1 Introduction.....	174
5.2 Findings of the Study	174
5.2.1 Findings Related to the First Research Question	174

5.2.2 Findings Related to the Second Research Question.....	176
5.2.3 Findings Related to the Third Research Question.....	178
5.3 Conclusions and Implications of the Study.....	179
5.4 Practical Considerations	180
5.5 Contribution to Knowledge	182
5.6 Limitations of the Study	184
5.8 Recommendations	185
References	196
Appendices	242
Appendix A: Questionnaire Information Sheet	243
Appendix B: Questionnaire	245
Appendix C: Pre-Test.....	246
Appendix D: Key Answers of the Pre-Test.....	249
Appendix E: Samples of Participants' Responses to the Pre-Test.....	250
Appendix F: Post-Test	253
Appendix G: Key Answers of the Post-Reading Test	256
Appendix H: Samples of Participants' Responses to the Post-Test	257
Appendix I: Reading Materials	260
Abstract in Arabic Language	306

List of Tables

Table No.	Description	Page
1	The Hierarchy Structure of The Libyan Education System	25
2	The Course Content of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi	113
3	Classroom Management in Teacher-Centered and Learner-Centered Classrooms	158
4	The Frequencies of Each Item in the Questionnaire	161
5	Frequencies of Pre-Test Scores for the Sample Size	167
6	Descriptive Statistics of the Final Scores for Both Groups	170
7	The Groups Differences Using T-Test	171

List of Figures

Table No.	Description	Page
1	Thesis Organization	30
2	Nunan's Definition of the Reading Skill (Nunan, 2003, p. 72)	32
3	Learner-Centered Teaching (Wilhelm, 2001, p. 11)	79
4	A General Methodological Framework Advocated by Creswell, (2009), Creswell and Creswell (2018).	118
5	The Methodological Framework of the Study Designed According to Creswell's (2009), and Creswell and Creswell's (2018).	118
6	The Experimental Design of the Study Adopted from Creswell and Creswell (2018, p.275)	134
7	<i>The Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model</i>	147
8	The Practical Application of <i>The Integral Three-Phases Learner-Centered Reading Model</i> in EFL Classrooms	153
9	Percentages of the Scores of Groups in Pre-and Post-Tests	172
10	Groups Differences Using Percentages	173
11	<i>The Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model</i>	181

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ACT	American College Testing
A-L-M	Audio-Lingual Method
AM	Ante Meridiem
BEC	Basic Education Certificate
BED	Bachelor of Education
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
DM	Direct Method
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
F	Frequency
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
Glob	Global Strategies
GPA	Grade Point Average
GPCE	The General People's Committee
GTM	Grammer Translation Method
L1	First Language
LCT	Learner-Centered Teaching
M	Mean
MA	Master of Arts
MARSI	Metacognitive Awareness Reading Strategy Inventory
NICHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
N	Number
P	Percentage
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PROB	Problem-Solving Strategies
REFL	Reading in English as a Foreign Language
SEC	Secondary Education Certificate
SECE	Secondary Education Certificate Examination
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SUB	Support Reading Strategies
TCL	Teacher-Centered Learning
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
ZAD	Zoom of Actual Development
ZPD	Zoom of Proximal Development

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Abstract

This study investigated the core difficult reading strategies for the first-semester EFL students at the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi. It aimed to identify the primary reasons behind these difficulties and determine whether different teaching approaches were effective in helping students overcome their reading difficulties. Grounded in a positivist paradigm, the study collected quantitative numerical evidence through conducting a questionnaire and a true experiment. Findings revealed that the ability to derive meanings from complex words through their components emerged as the most difficult reading strategy, deducing the meanings of new words through contextual clues and identifying main idea questions ranked as the second most difficult strategies. Answering detailed questions was third in terms of difficulty, while accurately identifying implied detail questions was found to be the least difficult among the assessed strategies. The results also indicated that a lack of knowledge of appropriate application of reading strategies contributed to students' reading comprehension difficulties. Therefore, the study has proposed an integral learner-centered reading model. The effectiveness of this designed model was tested during the study experiment. The results of *paired samples T-tests* and ANOVA conducted using SPSS indicated that both the control and experimental groups demonstrated improvements in their reading comprehension abilities. However, the experimental group achieved superior results compared to the control one. Additionally, the study provided recommendations to inform stakeholders, learners, teachers, curriculum designers, decision-makers, and future research to develop teaching and learning English language reading skills.

Keywords: *reading strategies, EFL contexts, teacher-centered approach, learner-centered approach*

Chapter One

Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as an introductory framework for the study, articulating the rationale that underpins this research. It identifies the core problem the study seeks to address, while also outlining its objectives, significance, and research questions. Furthermore, the chapter contextualizes the research by presenting an overview of the current status of teaching English as a foreign language in the context of the study. The chapter concludes with a presentation of essential definitions that will be encountered throughout the thesis, thereby setting the stage for a comprehensive understanding of the subsequent content.

1.2 Rationale of the Study

Reading is the most robust and crucial skill for learning English (Eskey, 2005; Graner, 1987; Nuttall, 1982), as English has become the predominant language of international communication in various domains, including business, science, technology, and entertainment (Crystal, 2011). Proficiency in reading English is now essential for both native and non-native speakers. In fact, with English emerging as the global lingua franca, the ability to read in English has become a cornerstone of modern life, playing a vital role in navigating the world and accessing opportunities in the international arena. A report by the British Council (2013) found that English was the most widely used language in global commerce and online communication, with more than half of all websites featured English as their primary language. It is the language of education and serves as the medium of instruction in many universities globally (Verghese, 2007). The majority of renowned universities worldwide mandate English proficiency or the completion of international English examinations such as TOEFL or IELTS for admission. Consequently, acquiring and utilizing skilled reading of English has become an imperative and fundamental element for students' success in this interconnected world.

Given this pivotal role of English as the language of globalization, reading in English is crucial for engaging with the global community and accessing the wealth of information and resources available in this language. Proficiency in reading English unlocks access to a vast reservoir of knowledge, empowering students to stay informed about global

events and advancements. The ability to read English plays a significant role in students' academic success (Azeroual, 2013) and is becoming increasingly essential in higher education (Najeeb, 2013). It is vital for students to engage with the international academic community, collaborate on research projects, and access the wealth of scholarly resources available in English. Furthermore, skillful reading in English enhances students' employability and career prospects, as it is often a prerequisite for many high-skilled jobs in the global marketplace. Therefore, developing proficiency in reading English has become a priority for many educational institutions and policymakers to ensure academic and professional success for individuals in this increasingly interconnected and English-dominant world.

Libya is part of this interconnected world, and there has been a growing tendency among Libyans to learn English, as they recognize the language's significance in securing work opportunities overseas and enhancing their employment chances. Many Libyans view reading in English as a skill that everyone must possess to survive in this world (Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015). In Libya, English is primarily presented as a foreign language, and its teaching and learning have undergone several dynamic phases influenced by the country's political landscape. These unstable stages have, in turn, affected the overall teaching of English in Libya and, more specifically, the reading proficiency of Libyan EFL learners. These issues are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

As an EFL teacher, the researcher of this study agrees with Eskey (2005) and Nuttall (1982) who believe that teaching reading is a vital area of investigation because the ability to read both academic and non-academic materials is considered one of the most important skills that EFL students need to acquire. In EFL settings, reading remains the primary skill on which learners focus to expand their knowledge and explore the English language. The ability to read is essential for learners in these settings to develop their English proficiency and access critical information that they use in various aspects (Melandita, 2019).

The rationale for this study came from a review of research on EFL reading comprehension strategies. Reading is a significant topic that has drawn the interest of many researchers who have emphasized the need for better instructional methods that focus on effective reading strategies to improve EFL reading skills, both globally (Palaming, 2018; Abdul Samad, 2017; Alharbi, 2022; Alotaibi, 2022; Qrquez & Rashid,

2017; Al-Jamal et al., 2013; Dallagi, 2021; Zayyad, 2009) and more specifically in Libya (Abosnan et al., 2020; Alagoriya & Elraggas, 2022; Elashad, 2018; Ghwela et al., 2017; Alghail & Mahfoodh, 2016).

In Libya, there has been a gap in the literature regarding reading comprehension issues. Some studies had explored whether extensive reading courses could help students, but they did not investigate the underlying causes of reading problems (Alagoriya & Elraggas, 2022). Other research focused on specific reasons for these reading difficulties but did not provide any practical solutions to be practiced in classrooms reality (Alghail & Mahfoodh, 2016; Benrabha, 2015; Ghwela et al., 2017). Additionally, while some studies highlighted the importance of reading strategies, they did not explain how to apply these strategies in real classroom or suggest methods for improvement (Algwil, 2024; Rashed, 2016; Elbleazi, 2006; Elmahjoub, 2014). Overall, this review shows a need for comprehensive instructional approaches that address both the causes of reading difficulties and practical solutions for their implementation. Consequently, the rationale for this research was to fulfill the gap found in literature by conducting a comprehensive multi-dimensional investigation for EFL reading strategies. It examined the nature of reading difficulties, the extent of application of reading strategies, and solutions for these difficulties.

In conclusion, the rationale for this research was to present insights that could be employed to improve both the theory and the practice of teaching reading in the Libyan EFL context in particular, and in other EFL contexts in general. This included identifying reading difficulties, understanding their causes, and developing effective teaching strategies to improve EFL students' knowledge and use of different reading comprehension strategies, as well as providing opportunities for further research to be conducted.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The issue of reading comprehension among Libyan EFL students is of a significant concern among Libyan researchers. While some noted that "reading is a skill which everyone must have to survive in this world" (Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015, p.1), others stated that in Libyan classrooms "there is no space for teaching reading strategies in order to read for comprehension" (Abosnan et al., 2020, p. 47). These two conflicting statements from Libyan researchers acknowledge the problem of reading

comprehension in the Libyan context. Research has consistently indicated that Libyan EFL students demonstrate inadequate reading comprehension abilities and a deficiency in effective reading strategies (Abosnan, 2016; Elbleazi, 2006). Notably, the reading competence of EFL Libyan students falls below acceptable levels (Rashed, 2016), accompanied by a notable lack of motivation and interest in learning the language (Algwil, 2024). Together, these findings reflect the state of reading comprehension abilities among Libyan EFL learners.

The effectiveness of students' reading abilities is heavily influenced by the teaching methods employed. Libyan EFL teachers had continued to rely on outdated and ineffective teaching methodologies (Azzouz & Ben-Taleb, 2020; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Omar, 2020; Omar, 2025), which had adversely impacted English language learning outcomes, leading to students achieving low levels of proficiency (Orafi, 2022; Wheida, 2023). It is the teachers who plays an important role in enhancing students' knowledge and confidence, which are essential for improving reading strategies (Abosnan, 2016). However, many Libyan EFL teachers lack the competence to effectively teach modern reading skills, with some researchers noting that their practices were outdated and did not adequately address the teaching of reading skills and strategies (Wheida, 2023; Elmadwi & Shepherd, 2014). They follow inappropriate instructional reading strategies that limited their students' reading abilities (Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015), and did not employ reading aids in their classrooms to improve their students' performance in reading (Zeat, 2020). Even if those EFL teachers were aware of reading strategies, they had problem in connecting theoretical knowledge with practical application of reading in the classrooms (Abosnan, 2016). Most of Libyan "teachers spent less time teaching reading techniques and encouraging the use of reading strategies than they did teaching things other than reading" (Elashhab, 2018, p.2). All in all, research in EFL reading indicated that the majority of Libyan EFL teachers relied on traditional teaching methods in presenting English in classrooms, and their methodology was outdated (Bagigni, 2016; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Mohamed, 2016; Omar, 2020; Omar, 2025).

The researcher of this study has observed these issues related to Libyan students' reading abilities, noting specific problems in their performance concerning English reading strategies. These observations prompted her to choose this topic for investigation. Given that the relationship between reading instructions and students'

outcomes is evidently influenced by the teaching methods employed (Azzouz & Taleb, 2020), it is essential for teachers to be fully aware of how to present reading skills and strategies in a manner that places students at the center of the learning process to foster a sense of responsibility among them to engage and interact with English reading texts. There is an urgent need for research to identify the root causes and understand the teaching strategies employed to help overcome these reading problems among Libyan EFL learners. Therefore, this study aimed to address this problem by investigating it from three interconnected dimensions: identifying the most difficult reading skills among EFL students, understanding the underlying reasons for their reading obstacles, and providing solutions to overcome these challenges.

1.4 Aims of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the core English reading comprehension difficulties experienced by Libyan EFL students. The investigation sought to identify the underlying reasons for these difficulties and to determine the effectiveness of both learner-centered and teacher-centered instructional approaches in assisting EFL students in overcoming their reading difficulties. The study aimed to answer the *what* questions related to the reading difficulties faced by EFL Libyan students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi.

1.5 Research Questions

The foundation of any study lies in the formulation of its research questions. These questions play a crucial role in guiding the researcher's actions during his/her research framework. The precision of the research questions also determines the specific unit of analysis in the study; therefore, it is essential for the research question(s) to be focused and carefully determined (Yin, 2009). Based on the literature discussed in the above sections, this research sought to answer the following research questions:

1. *To what extent the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi use reading strategies to overcome their reading difficulties?*
2. *What are the most difficult reading strategies that the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi encounter in comprehending English reading texts?*

3. *What effectiveness do teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches have in assisting the First-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi to overcome their reading difficulties?*

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research came in response for the constant demands for more research that focused on reading strategies among EFL Libyan students (Alagoriya & Elraggas, 2022; El-Mezughi, 2021; Ghwela et al., 2017; Omar, 2018), and the call for motivating EFL Libyan teachers to refine their teaching methods and enhance their professional qualifications (Elramli, 2023).

This study would provide an important contribution to EFL English instructors in general and EFL Libyan teachers in particular to establish and find innovate instructional methods to be applied in teaching reading comprehension to help students overcome their English reading comprehension difficulties. This contribution could be summarized in two points:

1. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to aid in identifying the difficulties that Libyan EFL students face in their reading comprehension abilities and to understand the underlying reasons for their deficiencies in this area. This research is considered to be significant as it would provide insights into the factors contributing to students' difficulties in comprehending English texts, allowing for practical solutions accordingly.
2. Practically, this research provides EFL teachers with practical and useful insights into effective reading instruction within the classroom reality. It aims to demonstrate how reading activities could be implemented in EFL classrooms in a manner that places learners at the center of the teaching process. To accomplish this, the study offers a practical model for implementing learner-centered teaching strategies in EFL reading classes. This model would enhance teachers' awareness and encourage them to refine their instructional approaches.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of academic research is defined as the boundaries and parameters within which the research is practiced (Merrican, 1998). A clearly defined scope of any research ensures that the research is focused, manageable, and feasible within specified parameters (Merrican, 1998). Amongst the four language skills (listening, speaking,

reading, and writing), the scope of this study was restricted to the investigation of the reading skills. It was limited to the investigation of the reading strategies employed by the first semester EFL students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi in the eastern part of Libya. The scope of this current study was centered in the Libyan context.

1.8 Context of Study

Libya, the context of this study, is the fourth largest country in Africa, bordered to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by Chad and Niger, to the east by Egypt and a small portion of Sudan, and to the west by Tunisia and Algeria. The climate in Libya is predominantly arid and hot, with the coastal areas experiencing a milder climate (Buhlfaia, 2006). Winters are characterized by wet and cool conditions. Generally, days across the country are warm or hot, while nights tend to be cooler. According to Buhlfaia (2006), Libya experiences only two seasons: a mild winter from November to April and a hot summer from May to October. The primary distinctions between these seasons lie in variations in daytime temperatures and shifts in prevailing winds. The dominant winds, known as "Ghibli," originate from the south and are dry, hot, and laden with dust and sand, particularly prevalent during the summer months (Buhlfaia, 2006).

Covering a vast land area of approximately 1,759,540 square kilometers, Libya has a population of 6,931,061 according to preliminary results from the General Census of 2020 (General Information Authority, 2024), the majority of whom live mainly in the northern part of the country. Agnaia (1996) noted that Libya is a bilingual nation, with Arabic and Berber as the primary languages spoken. The Berber-speaking population, which is a minority, resides mainly in the cities of Zuwara and Yefren in the western mountains of Libya, where they communicate in their language and pass it down to their children (Agnaia, 1996). In contrast, Arabic serves as the sole official language of Libya and is the medium of instruction in the education system, differing from the various dialects spoken across different regions of the country (Elabbar, 2016).

With regard to foreign languages, English is the most widely used foreign language and is emphasized significantly within the Libyan educational system (Omar, 2020). The Libyan official educational framework places English alongside Arabic as a crucial component of the learning process. English, in Libyan public classrooms, is presented

as a foreign language (Abosnan, 2016; Elabbar, 2011; Omar, 2014, 2020). The General People's Committees of Education outlined several overarching goals for the education system in Libya, including equipping students with proficiency in both Arabic and English to facilitate effective global communication (GPCE, 2008, as cited in Owen et al., 2019). Consequently, nearly every university and local school in Libya offers English as a standalone subject, and English lessons have become a daily staple at all levels of the Libyan educational system.

Libyans have recognized the significance of English. They have understood its role as the dominant language in various sectors such as trade, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, and scientific research (Kachru, 1992 in Bagigni, 2016). People in Libya are now making every effort to acquire proficiency in English, which they were unable to learn due to political factors (see section 1.7.1). Many of them are actively pursuing opportunities to learn English, as it has become a language associated with prestige and a mark of education. Teaching English has become a profitable business, with private institutions offering courses at various levels, ranging from beginner to advanced, emerging throughout the country. Private schools in Libya now emphasize the amount of English instruction provided to students per week in their advertisements. Furthermore, some Libyans who possess strong English communication skills and hold certificates demonstrating their competence in the language have a greater likelihood of securing good employment opportunities in companies and other sectors compared to their non-English speaking counterparts' countries (Bagigni, 2016). Consequently, Libyans of all ages, including older individuals, are now actively seeking to learn English realizing its vitality in life.

Despite this growing tendency among Libyans to learn English, recognizing its significance in securing overseas work opportunities, the status of the English language in Libya has undergone a series of dynamic transformations due to political reasons. These political influences have significantly impacted the proficiency and command of this global language among the Libyan people. The development of English language skills, particularly in the domain of reading proficiency, has been affected by these unstable stages, posing challenges for Libyan learners in their pursuit of mastering this internationally dominant language. The subsequent sections offer a detailed examination of the presentation of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Libya throughout different political eras in Libya. This includes an overview of changes in

EFL textbooks, teaching methods employed, the status of EFL within the Libyan educational system, and the characteristics of EFL classrooms in higher education institutions.

1.8.1 EFL Presentation in Libya

The presentation of English as a foreign language in Libya has undergone a range of dynamic stages due to political reasons. According to Elabbar (2016) and Mohamed (2016), during the Gaddafi Era, the Libyan educational system operated under a top-down decision-making structure, which led to the politicization of education. Most decision-makers lacked sufficient qualifications, resulting in poor decisions that negatively impacted the educational system at that period of time (Mohamed 2016).

As a result of some political circumstances during the Gaddafi's Era, the Minister of Education made the decision No. 195/1986 to stop teaching foreign languages in Libya. The government rejected the inclusion of foreign languages in the school curricula, banning the teaching of English in schools and universities for nearly a decade starting from 1986 to 1993. Teaching of English was resumed again in the year 1993 (Mohsen, 2014). Consequently, there was a gap of the seven-year period during which English was not used in classrooms, outside of them, or anywhere else in Libya (Tomi, 2023). It meant that a generation grew up without exposure to foreign languages. Furthermore, access to the Internet was limited until 2002, restricting people's knowledge of other educational systems and cultures (Mohamed, 2016; Omar, 2020).

In the mid-1990s, the Libyan government reintroduced English language teaching into its educational system without a clear strategy (Mohamed, 2016). This process was plagued by numerous challenges and problems, and the consequences of excluding the English language began to emerge. According to Bagigni (2016) and Mohsen (2014), the decision had far-reaching consequences, impacting the entire educational system. It led to several issues, including low English proficiency among students, a shortage of English language professionals, and English teachers being forced to teach subjects outside their expertise. Additionally, the isolation from the global community was a significant outcome. This decision, made in the 1980s, had lasting effects on the Libyan educational system and the country's ability to interact with the outside world (Mohsen, 2014). Khalid (2017) noted that this decision was described as the most painful period in the history of the Libyan educational sector, as it affected the education system for

many years. It is worth noting that the use of English in Libya's official institutions continued to be not permitted for dealings with the country's legal system and for transactions with the official administration in Libya until now (Bagigni, 2016).

According to Elabbar (2016), Libya has followed the 2011 youth movements across the Middle East, commonly referred to as the *Arab Spring*. Benghazi, Libya's second-largest city, witnessed a series of protests. Distrustful of his military, Gaddafi resorted to hiring approximately 6,000 Sub-Saharan African mercenaries and ordered airstrikes using ground attack jets and helicopter gunships against the demonstrators in Benghazi. Despite these violent measures, the city was captured by the protesters on February 20, resulting in the expulsion of pro-Gaddafi loyalists. In response to the escalating violence, the Arab League initiated discussions with the African Union regarding a potential no-fly zone over the country to protect protests. By August 2011, a significant turning point occurred as revolutionaries from various Libyan cities, including Benghazi and Tripoli, advanced toward Gaddafi's presidential compound, ultimately leading to the downfall of his 42-year dictatorship. However, the battles between the Libyan revolutionaries, NATO, and Gaddafi's remaining forces continued (after August 2011) in some cities loyal to him until approximately the end of 2011 (Elabbar, 2016).

The researcher has personally experienced these political changes and has been a witness to all of these political dynamics. From the beginning of 2011, Libyans faced serious and unpredictable political changes that greatly affected education overall, especially in EFL learning. In cities at the heart of the protests, schools were closed for months which has affected the learning process in general. Even after the National Transitional Council announced that classes could resume and schools would reopen, many public schools in areas like Benghazi in the east, Misratah, and Zwara in the west were heavily damaged, making it impossible to continue education there. This situation forced Libyan authorities to increase student enrollment in operational schools in other less affected cities, leading to overcrowded classrooms. Other families preferred to take their children to rural areas where schools had survived the damage just for final examinations. Similarly, universities like Benghazi University were also severely damaged, which led to classes being held in public schools during the evening hours. Many families felt unsafe sending their children to these institutions due to worsening security conditions and fears of retaliation from remnants of sub-Saharan African mercenaries or Gaddafi supporters. Further, ongoing conflicts between various military

groups, known as *Al-Kataeb* by Libyans, caused frequent explosions and blocked roads, making it difficult for students to reach schools and universities. As a result, many families limited their children's school attendance to only final exams.

Elabbar (2016) summarized the situation in Libya from 2012 to 2016, highlighting the ongoing political and security challenges that led to a civil war among various factions. This turmoil created unstable learning conditions and significantly affected educational development, particularly in EFL instructions. Vandewall (2015) also pointed out that Libya's educational programs struggle with inconsistent curricula and a shortage of qualified teachers, largely due to inadequate development efforts and the ongoing conflict. It is until 2024, these unstable circumstances persist, with periodic battles prompting several embassies to issue warnings about the risks of attacks in the region (Libya Update, 2024, April 13). And many families have chosen to leave the country until stability is restored, further contributing to the shortage of qualified English teachers.

In conclusion, Gaddafi's decisions to ban and then reintroduce English in Libya, along with the country's complex political situation, have significantly impacted the quality of English language teaching and learning in the Libyan education system. These changes have influenced not only the availability of English textbooks but also their content and format. The following section presents how these political dynamics have affected the presentation and availability of EFL textbooks.

1.8.2 EFL Textbooks in Libya

Textbooks play a crucial role in foreign language curricula to establish a clear structure and framework to follow (Ur, 1996). They are designed to incorporate diverse materials such as reading passages, exercises, and assessments that cater to various learning styles. They serve as the most effective means of providing the structure required for the teaching-learning system, particularly during times of change (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). In Libya, EFL textbooks have undergone a series of modifications, some of which were driven by efforts aimed at development and enhancement, while others were influenced by the political changes and dynamics occurring within the Libyan context.

According to Hashim (1997) cited in Owen et al. (2019), the first English language textbook series in Libya was titled *Basic Reading Book* written by L.W. Lockhart. The

textbook was given to the preparatory level, and it was taught by teachers from other nationalities such as Egyptians and Palestinians for four lessons per week for the whole academic year (Orafi, 2008). In addition, the *Basic Way to English* book by KC Ogden, which focused on teaching English through a vocabulary of 850 words, was used for reading and comprehension exercises (Orafi, 2008). Owen et al. (2019) added that, in the early 1960s, a new series was introduced to replace the earlier ones for the post-primary stage, specifically for the 4th and 5th grades. This series, titled *New Method* by Michael West, was written with an emphasis on Arab culture. It was used until 1957, when it was replaced by a new textbook titled *Modern Reader* written by A. Johnson, who was an English language inspector in Egypt at the time (Barton, 1968). This textbook was based on the Grammar translation method, which emphasized learning through reading vocabulary. In 1965, the Libyan Ministry of Education took a step to change the system of instruction of the English language, and a new textbook series was introduced, which was called *English for Libya* which was based on the direct method (Barton, 1968). However, the curriculum was criticized for focusing on memorization of isolated vocabulary and sentences, application of grammatical structures, and on translating and understanding reading texts therefore, it was changed (Orafi & Borg, 2009).

In the 1970s, at the outset of Gaddafi's revolution, a new textbook called *Living English for Libya* was introduced to two levels preparatory and secondary students, and it focused on reading comprehension and grammar (Orafi, 2008). According to Mohsen (2014), following the introduction of the initial textbook series, two new sets of English language materials were introduced in Libya. The first, *English for Libya*, was authored by Mustafa Gusbi, while the second, *Further English for Libya*, was co-authored by Mustafa Gusbi and Roland John. These textbooks were designed to incorporate Western cultural elements and topics to facilitate the teaching of English. The series, which included three books *Further English for Libya One, Two and Three*, was accompanied by workbooks and teacher's handbooks. The use of these materials became mandatory for Libyan English teachers, who were required to adopt a Western-oriented approach to teaching English. This series remained in use until the 1980s (Orafi, 2008). The *English for Libya* textbook series was in use until Colonel Gaddafi directed the Ministry of Education in Libya to implement decision No. 195/1986, which halted the teaching of foreign languages, including English (Mohsen, 2014).

According to Orafi (2008), in the 1993/1994 academic year, when the teaching of English as a foreign language was reinstated in Libya, the *English for Libya* textbook series being used across all levels of education. This was a deliberate decision by the Ministry of Education to account for the years of English language teaching that had been suspended. The same textbook was used for all levels to ensure that students were at a similar level of proficiency (Orafi, 2008). Later, in the 2000/2001 academic year, a new revised version of the *English for Libya* series was introduced for primary and secondary levels (Orafi & Abdullah, 2022). This course was published by Garnet Education Company (GEC) in the UK. This was followed by the introduction of another textbook series for the third-level primary students in the 2005/2006 academic year. However, this series was only used for one year and was then limited to 5th and 6th primary grade students in the 2006/2007 academic year (Orafi, 2008). This decision resulted in third-year students being deprived of English language instruction once again, thereby extending the English language learning gap (Orafi, 2008). Gadour (2011) argued that the curriculum taught in Libyan schools during this period was not aligned with the skills students needed to thrive in life. As a result, the Libyan education system failed to produce graduates with essential life competencies, including communication skills and proficiency in foreign languages (Gadour, 2011).

Mohsen (2014) noted that the new version of the *English for Libya* textbook series by GEC was designed to enhance communicative skills and increase vocabulary. Although grammar and vocabulary were also covered in separate sections, the skills were meant to be taught together communicatively. The book was divided into eight units, each with a different theme, and the four language skills were integrated throughout the lessons (Mohsen, 2014). Even though this new series of *English for Libya* textbooks were designed to be taught using a communicative approach, they were taught by Libyan teachers employing traditional teaching methods (Abushafa, 2014; Elabbar, 2011; Mohsen, 2014; Orafi, 2008). However, from 2012 to 2016, Libya was engulfed in political turmoil and security challenges that escalated into a civil war among various factions (Elabbar, 2016). As a result, the new government did not prioritize educational development, and the *English for Libya* series continued to serve as the primary curriculum for teaching English as a foreign language, as Vandewall (2015) argued that Libya's educational programs face significant obstacles, including inadequate development efforts and the ongoing conflict have adversely affected teachers'

instructional methods and their ability to manage fluctuating educational materials (Vandewall, 2015).

Following the revolution on February 17, 2011, Libya's national curriculum underwent significant changes to eliminate elements associated with Gaddafi, including his symbols from the *English for Libya* textbooks. Mohammed Sawi, the director of the National Curriculum Reform Office, stated that "we do not want anything that signifies him, neither his name, his family, nor his symbols and signature green color" (Duncan & Werman, August 14, 2013). As an initial step, a rapid purge of the most overt symbols of his regime was implemented in schools and textbooks. This action was intended as a temporary solution until Libya's transitional period concluded and a new government was established (Duncan & Werman, August 14, 2013).

It was not until 2018 that the new government developed a series titled *21st Century English for Libya* (Orafi & Abdullah, 2022). This course systematically eliminated references to Gaddafi's ideological expressions such as *Al-Jamahiriyah*, *Green Book*, and green coloring of Libya's maps, along with any imagery associated with him. The content of this series was tailored to meet the needs of Libyan students, focusing on relevant topics without political ideologies. According to the Libyan Ministry of Education (2018), the series integrated a general English syllabus with essential 21st Century skills, including study skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills that were crucial for students to thrive in today's world (Ministry of Education, 2018). It is worth noting that the reprinted version of this book in 2020 was utilized in this study to design the pre-test and post-test administered during the experiment of this research (see *Chapter Three*).

Libyan EFL textbooks have been the subject of several research studies, emphasizing the necessity not only to modify these textbooks but also to raise awareness regarding the practical application and innovative methods for presenting them to EFL learners in Libya. For example, Wheida (2023) noted that Libyan EFL teachers faced significant challenges in effectively delivering the 21st-century skills outlined in the *21st Century English for Libya* textbooks due to a lack of essential resources such as language laboratories and audiovisual aids which were crucial for effective language instruction, and that many EFL Libyan teachers lacked the necessary experience and training to teach these modern skills which complicate their ability to implement the new English curriculum. Therefore, these teachers were expected to execute Libya's updated

curriculum without teaching experience or specialized training in contemporary educational methods (Wheida, 2023). Also, Tomi (2023) conducted an evaluative study highlighting the need for modifications and improvements to the *English for Libya* textbook series. She concluded that the cultural adaptations made thus far need to be reassessed, as some English names had not been replaced with Libyan equivalents. She added that the number of new vocabulary terms should be reduced and simplified, and authentic materials that reflect actual language use by native speakers should be more included enabling students to engage in a realistic language learning process. Orafi (2008) and Tomi (2023) commented that to achieve these objectives, it was necessary to increase the number of classes allocated for teaching the *English for Libya* textbooks beyond the current four lessons per week. This adjustment would allow students to feel more focused and relaxed during English lessons (Tomi, 2023).

However, other Libyan researchers argued that improving Libyan learners' command of English required a comprehensive understanding of the various factors that shape classroom dynamics in Libya, rather than merely introducing new textbooks (Orafi, 2022). This perspective emphasized the need to recognize the roles and beliefs of key stakeholders, including school principals, teacher educators, parents, inspectors, and students, all of whom significantly influenced the educational environment. Acknowledging and addressing these interconnected factors were crucial for fostering an effective presentation of Libyan EFL textbooks in classrooms (Orafi, 2022).

In conclusion, a variety of EFL textbooks has been introduced into the Libyan educational landscape, each embodied the educational ideologies and perspectives of Libyan politicians throughout different historical periods. Following the stabilization of the country and the end of civil conflict, Libyan authorities have made significant efforts to enhance English language teaching and learning. Many researchers such as Orafi (2022), Tomi (2023), and Wheida (2023) has continuously assessed and sought to understand the interconnected factors influencing effective applicability of EFL textbooks in Libya, all emphasized the necessity for training programs that equip Libyan EFL teachers with modern pedagogical skills. Furthermore, improving resource availability such as language laboratories and audiovisual aids, and fostering community engagement were critical components. Understanding local culture and addressing systemic challenges were essential for creating an environment to the effective implementation of Libyan EFL textbooks (Orafi, 2022; Tomi, 2023; Wheida,

2023). Methods employed by Libyan EFL teachers in teaching English and presenting EFL textbooks in classrooms are briefly discussed in the following section.

1.8.3 EFL Teaching Methods in Libya

The instability of the political landscape in Libya had significantly impacted not only the availability and presentation of EFL textbooks but also the presence of qualified English language teachers. Gaddafi's decisions to suspend and subsequently reinstate English instruction hindered the professional development of EFL teachers, as no systematic teacher-training programs were established to update their teaching methodologies (Mohamed, 2016), leading to students facing considerable challenges in developing comprehension strategies and communicative techniques (Abushafa, 2014; Orafi & Borg, 2009). Many EFL Libyan teachers struggled to resume their teaching roles due to a lack of practical experience, while numerous university students at the time were forced to study English with minimal foundational knowledge. Consequently, upon graduation, these individuals entered the teaching profession with a limited command of the language (Mohamed, 2016). This dire situation had prompted many educators to urge the Libyan Ministry of Education to recruit foreign teachers from countries such as Egypt, South Africa, and India, recalling past practices from the 1970s and 1980s when educators from India and Ghana were employed in Libya to address similar challenges (Mohsen, 2014).

According to Mohamed (2016), in the mid-1990s, when the Libyan government reintroduced English language teaching into its educational system without a clear strategy, this process was plagued by numerous challenges and problems. The state of English language teaching in Libya during this period was summarized by UNESCO (1996), known as follows: Libyan schools were deficient in utilizing educational media. Although some institutions possessed overhead projectors, it appeared that teachers lacked the necessary materials, such as printed or blank transparencies and suitable pens, to effectively utilize these tools. Even when a new series of English for Libya was introduced based on communicative principles, the learning objectives and teaching practices remained far from being communicative due to an inadequate environment and infrastructure. For instance, reading instruction was supposed to involve pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities, but it was taught in a traditional manner. Academics observed significant differences between the intentions of the curriculum objectives and their implementation by teachers (Mohamed, 2016).

Mohsen (2014) stated that UNESCO played a significant role in providing extensive support to Libya. This support primarily focused on the establishment of various educational systems, including the establishment of higher teacher training colleges. In the 2000s, a few brief summer training programs were arranged for English teachers, however, their participation in these courses was minimal because: First, they lacked awareness of the advantages of training and the timing of the courses did not align with the teachers' perception of summer vacation (Mohsen, 2014). Second, these training programs were ineffective because of the teachers' cultural background which had a negative impact on the process of these training programs (Gadour, 2006). Third, these training programs were taught by university educators whom themselves lacked experience in the way teaching works as noted by Elashab (2018, p.38) that "programs were not successful as the teachers were more accustomed to the older techniques and were not very responsive to the new up-to-date ones." Moreover, training courses at that period focused more on theory than practical application, and universities did not provide pre-service or in-service training to help teachers bridge the gap between theory and practice (Suwaed, 2011).

Following the 2011 revolution, the persistent political instability in Libya led numerous embassies to issue warnings to their citizens about the dangers of remaining in the country as regional tensions escalated (The Libya Update, 2024, April 13). This situation had resulted in a significant shortage of proficient English teachers and a lack of professional training courses for Libyan EFL educators. Consequently, Libyan EFL teachers had continued to rely on outdated and ineffective teaching methodologies (Azzouz & Ben-Taleb, 2020), which had adversely impacted English language learning outcomes, leading to students achieving low levels of proficiency (Orafi, 2022; Wheida, 2023).

Because of this absence of effective teacher-training courses, traditional methods of teaching English to EFL students continue to be employed in the Libyan educational system, and many Libyan teachers were unaware of the relatively new approach to language instruction (Abushafa, 2014; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Hamid, 2010; Omar, 2020, 2025). Most EFL Libyan teachers emphasized achieving the curriculum's completion as well as focusing on test-oriented instructions (Ahmed, 2018). The role of Libyan EFL teachers primarily revolved around efficiently delivering information to their students whose primary objective of education was to achieve excellent grades and

successfully pass examinations (Alhmali, 2007), and there was limited awareness regarding the most effective strategies for enhancing students' learning development among EFL Libyan teachers (Abushafa, 2014; Alhmali, 2007; Wheida, 2023). This led to inadequate English language proficiency among Libyan EFL students (Omar, 2014).

According to multiple Libyan researchers, traditional teacher-authority methods, were widely used in Libyan EFL classrooms (Algwil, 2024; AlManafi, 2023; Azzouz & Ben-Taleb, 2020; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Elashhab, 2018; Elramli, 2023; Omar, 2020, 2025; Zeat, 2020; Zraga, 2018). Teacher-centered traditional methods such as the Grammar Translation Method and the Audio-Lingual Method (thoroughly discussed in *Chapter Two*) are still widely used for teaching English in Libya (Ahmed, 2018; Elabbar, 2011; Mohamed, 2016; Mohsen, 2014; Orafi, 2008). These methods, where all activities depend on the teacher and there is little opportunity for students to practice their own skills and develop their reading abilities, tend to be preferable by most Libyans as they are similar to the Quranic method, where learning depend on *the Sheikh* (Abosnan, 2016; Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015). *The Sheikh* reads aloud to everyone, then students practice reading aloud, drilling, and memorizing what they have heard from him several times (Alsadik & Abdulkarim, 2012). This method of teaching *The Holy Quran* has significantly impacted the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Libya, resulting in traditional EFL approaches characterized by a strong emphasis on teacher authority and student passivity who predominantly rely on drilling and memorization in various activities, including reading and grammar patterns (Abosnan, 2016).

Libyan EFL teachers are often more familiar with traditional teaching techniques and may be less open to modern methods (Elashhab, 2018). Many English teachers in Libya base their approaches on personal beliefs about what best serves their students or what aligns with their own educational experiences (Orafi & Abdullah, 2022). For instance, EFL lecturers at national universities have the freedom to select their teaching methods, as they are considered qualified professionals with advanced degrees like PhD or MA in English language teaching (Elabbar, 2017; Suwaed, 2011). However, this autonomy often results in the continued use of traditional, teacher-centered approaches (Algwil, 2024; AlManafi, 2023; Azzouz & Ben-Taleb, 2020; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Elramli, 2023; Omar, 2020; Zeat, 2020). Some researchers attributed this reliance on

traditional methods to faculty regulations that emphasize teacher authority in the classroom (Algwil, 2024).

In conclusion, the prevailing unstable political conditions in Libya, coupled with the continuous exposure to conflict, had profoundly affected the presence of proficient EFL teachers and the quality of EFL instructions. The lack of access to updated training programs that allow EFL teachers to enhance their teaching practices with more advanced and innovative methodologies has severely compromised the quality of education and the learning outcomes within the Libyan EFL context. The impact of Libya's unstable political situation has also extended to the overall physical conditions and characteristics of EFL classroom environments for teaching and learning English as a foreign language, as it is described in the following section.

1.8.4 EFL Classrooms in Libya

Classrooms are the physical environment where teaching takes place (Stahl & Kuhn, 2002). Educators commonly believe that the physical environment and availability of facilities in classrooms greatly influence the teaching quality. Factors such as comfortable furniture, well-ventilated and brightly lit classrooms, and access to resources like smartboards, computers, projectors, audiobooks, language laboratories, and internet connectivity all contribute to effective teaching instructions and learning outcomes. However, the consistency of availability of these resources in Libyan EFL classrooms has been unreliable, largely due to the continuous outbreaks of conflict at various times.

In this section, the researcher reflected on her extensive experiences and observations of the conditions in the Libyan public EFL classrooms throughout her teaching and learning career. She has attended these classrooms as an EFL student and an EFL teacher in the Department of English at the University of Benghazi for more than two decades. During this period of time, she has experienced the conditions of Libyan EFL classrooms across two significant political transitions that has profoundly impacted the infrastructure of these classrooms: First, the Gaddafi era when the researcher was an EFL student for seven years while pursuing her bachelor's and master's degrees in the Department of English at Garyounis University (now known as University of Benghazi after Gaddafi's overthrow). Second, the Revolution of February the 17th in (2011) when she has served as an EFL lecturer at Libyan Universities, and she has enrolled in a Ph.D.

program returning back as an EFL student in Libyan classrooms for four years leading up to the writing of this research. This extensive experience as an EFL student and lecturer has equipped her to provide a comprehensive perspective on the realities and conditions of Libyan public university classrooms.

The researcher's knowledge and observations of the conditions and characteristics of Libyan classrooms formed the basis for collecting information relevant to this section. The researcher made field notes based on her observations; thus, this approach constituted an anthropological participant observation study. One of the drawbacks of using this type of observation is that it is limited to the researcher's own experience, representing a one-person perspective (Walliman, 2006). However, the researcher is confident that the findings accurately reflect the real conditions and realities of Libyan EFL classrooms, aligning with the knowledge of any EFL teacher or student who has studied or taught at Libyan local universities. To enhance the validity of the information presented in this section, the researcher shared her observational notes with four Libyan EFL Ph.D. students, all of whom had completed their bachelor's and master's degrees in Libyan EFL classrooms and were currently lecturing at public universities. This collaborative review aimed to verify the content and relevance of the descriptions regarding the conditions of Libyan EFL classrooms presented in this study. All four consulted lecturers concurred with the description of the state of Libyan EFL classrooms provided in this section.

It is important to note that by the time this research was compiled, changes in Libyan classrooms may have occurred due to the new government's efforts to rebuild and maintain Libyan universities following the overthrow of Gaddafi's regime. Consequently, inevitably some of the information presented in this section may be subject to change very shortly.

EFL classrooms at the University of Benghazi during the Gaddafi era were characterized by their large size, typically accommodating 90 to 130 students in each class (Elabbar, 2016), especially in first-year classes that experienced an influx of new students from secondary schools. Class size, defined as the number of students assigned to a single instructor (Mosteller, 1995), could significantly hinder effective teaching practices and reduce opportunities for interaction and collaboration among students and teachers (Sarwar, 2001). In large-sized classes, increased noise levels and disruptive behaviors lead to limited the range of activities that a teacher could implement within a

constrained timeframe (Ehrenberg et al., 2001). Most Libyan EFL teachers had difficulty in managing and controlling big classes, and they could not evaluate all students in large class (Abu Habil & Abu Lifa, 2020). This issue was particularly pronounced for Libyan EFL teachers, especially in lectures where student groups exceeded 80 individuals per a class. Such lectures were typically conducted in large auditoriums equipped with microphones and air conditioning to accommodate the high number of students; however, this format often resulted in a lack of group work or interaction due to the sheer volume of attendees. Other EFL classes, which were slightly smaller in size, were held in soundproof teaching rooms that feature wide, airy windows without curtains or air conditioning.

Also, during the Gaddafi era, students were seated on wooden chairs attached to small tables, allowing them to write notes comfortably. Blackboards were present in these rooms, but teachers had to bring their chalk and erasers if they wanted to use the board; some lecturers could not afford these supplies due to low salaries (Algwil, 2020), leading them to rely solely on oral presentations without utilizing the board. Listening and speaking classes were conducted in soundproof language laboratories that were once well-equipped with essential audio-visual resources and microphones for language practice. Unfortunately, these EFL classrooms, auditoriums, and laboratories were not regularly maintained or cared for during the Gaddafi era, resulting in damage that adversely affected the teaching and learning process and ultimately impacted both student and teacher outcomes.

Classrooms at Benghazi University experienced severe deterioration during the overthrow of Gaddafi, particularly following the 17th of February Revolution. Universities and schools became battlegrounds, resulting in severe damage to facilities, including language laboratories, auditoriums, soundproof classrooms, the central library, and administrative buildings. Consequently, academic activities at the university were temporarily suspended. In response to this crisis, Libyan authorities and the university administration decided to convert dormitories into classrooms for teaching purposes. Various university departments relocated to these accommodations, while others resumed their educational activities in public schools that had been restored from damage, operating during evening hours.

Since that time, and continuing until the writing of this research, EFL teaching at the University of Benghazi has been conducted in basic infrastructure classrooms.

Similarly, in the case of the Faculty of Education, the setting of this study (see *Chapter Three*), although located outside the campus, EFL classrooms typically share the same conditions as those at Benghazi University. Classes consist of wooden desks, whiteboards, large windows, and white lamps. Desks in the classroom are typically designed as twin benches accommodating two students seated together or as single chairs linked to individual tables. However, in many instances, the number of available desks is insufficient for the total student population, resulting in many students having to search for additional desks in other rooms, often consuming the first fifteen minutes of the lecture.

In Libyan EFL classrooms, teachers primarily use standard whiteboards instead of smart boards, which mean they write with erasable markers. However, sometimes lecturers forget to bring these markers, leading to writing accumulating on the boards over several lectures and creating a messy appearance. As a result, some lecturers choose to rely on oral presentations or explanations instead of using the board. When writing is necessary, information is often spelled out or dictated for students to transcribe, especially if the board is not clear enough for effective learning.

The number of students in EFL classrooms remained high after the 17th of February Revolution, usually ranging from 35 to 45 students per class. This situation placed significant pressure on Libyan EFL teachers, who often feel overwhelmed by the large enrollments. As a result, they frequently lack the time to reflect on and assess student performance or to offer individualized feedback (Abu Habil & Abu Lifa, 2020). Consequently, many students struggle to understand the quality of their performance and do not receive enough guidance to improve their communication skills (Asswail, 2020; El Mezughi, 2012; Omar, 2020; Zraga, 2018). The large class sizes and time constraints force Libyan EFL teachers to focus on certain skills while neglecting others (Wheida, 2023).

Furthermore, Libyan EFL classrooms lack air conditioning, which is essential given the climate conditions in Libya. The weather features hot, dry summers accompanied by a hot, dust-laden wind from the desert, referred to as *The Ghibli*, along with mild winters that occasionally bring rainfall (Bagigni, 2016; Buhlfaia, 2006). In addition, most lectures are scheduled for early morning and afternoon hours, coinciding with peak heat periods. These high temperatures, combined with the lack of air conditioning and the large number of students in classrooms, significantly hinder academic performance and

outcomes for both teachers and students, particularly during excessively hot days (Mosteller, 1995; Will, 2022). This situation leads to a constant need to open windows for fresh air. However, opening classroom windows increases external noise entering the classrooms, making it challenging for both teachers and students to concentrate during lectures (Asswail, 2020). In many instances, students seated at the back of the classroom could hardly hear their teachers at all with the windows open. Furthermore, the absence of curtains on the windows distracts students by allowing movement from individuals outside to be seen, while passersby often peer into the classroom. This disrupts the concentration of both teachers and students and frequently interrupts the flow of ideas during discussions, hindering student interaction. For the sake of honesty, it is important to note that in the summer of 2025, the researcher, who is part of the teaching staff at the University of Benghazi, observed that the administration equipped every classroom with one air conditioning unit. Unfortunately, these units are very weak and do not cover the entire area of the room, especially with a large number of students. Additionally, electricity is often unavailable in Libya.

Essential resources, such as audiobooks and visual aids that could enhance student engagement and facilitate comprehension, are largely unavailable in Libyan EFL classrooms. Although some lecturers make personal efforts to incorporate these resources, they frequently face challenges related to electricity supply, as power outages are common in Libya. Additionally, some electrical sockets in classrooms are damaged, necessitating that teachers occasionally change rooms to find functional outlets. This situation often results in the need to relocate students from one room to another, ultimately wasting valuable time during lectures. Furthermore, some Libyan EFL teachers express concerns that these devices are cumbersome and overwhelming to transport daily, while others cannot afford these costly electronic tools due to their low salaries. The lack of these essential resources negatively impacts teaching and learning outcomes, complicating the implementation of updated instructional methods and hindering efforts to promote interaction and engagement in the classroom (Abushafa, 2014; Wheida, 2023; Zeat, 2022; Zraga, 2018).

Internet infrastructure in Libyan EFL classrooms at public universities is inadequate (El Daibani & Elfeitouri, 2025); access is often limited to personal devices that students and lecturers must charge themselves. This lack of reliable internet access poses a significant barrier to enhancing research capabilities among teachers and students. The

ability to utilize online resources, such as educational videos on platforms like *YouTube*, can greatly enrich the teaching and learning process (UNICEF, 2020). Improving internet infrastructure is essential for facilitating better educational outcomes and fostering a more interactive learning environment in Libya.

Finally, factors such as the comfortable physical environment, availability of facilities and resources play crucial roles in fostering interaction and facilitating engagement among EFL learners. In other words, the absence of essential teaching tools such as data projectors, language laboratories, libraries, reliable internet connections, electricity, and electronic boards restricts the learning process for students and lecturers alike and poses significant challenges to the implementation of updated teaching methods in Libya (Algwil, 2024; El Daibani & Elfeitouri, 2025; Wheida, 2023; Zeat, 2022; Zraga, 2018).

1.8.5 The Educational System in Libya

Generally speaking, the Libyan educational system comprised six years of primary school, three years of intermediate school, three years of secondary school, and four to six years of university education. Education in Libyan public schools and universities is provided free of charge for citizens up to the undergraduate level, including postgraduate courses, and both primary and secondary education are mandatory. During Gaddafi's regime, English was introduced in the fifth year of primary public school and was taught for three hours a week until the end of secondary education (Mohamed, 2016). However, following the events of 2011, English is taught from the first year of public school, with each class receiving three to five lessons per week. In Libyan national schools, a typical school week allocates more instructional time to Arabic than to English; Arabic is the medium of instructions for other subjects and is commonly used in daily interactions, while English is primarily confined to English language classes only (Ghuma, 2011).

The educational system in Libya is characterized by a highly centralized and complex hierarchical structure. The General People's Committee (GPCE) is responsible for managing and controlling the entire system. Consequently, all decisions regarding funding, school distribution, teacher employment, school admission regulations, curriculum development, examinations, and inspections are made by policymakers and university staff at the top of the hierarchy. This structure is illustrated in the hierarchy outlined by GPCE. *Table 1* below provides a detailed illustration of this educational

hierarchical system for enrolling Libyan learners from kindergarten education to High education.

Table 1: *The Hierarchy Structure of the Libyan Education System*

Stage	Duration	Grade	Age
Kindergarten	2 years		4 - 5
Primary	6 years	2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	6 - 12
Preparatory	3years	7, 8 and 9	13 - 15
Intermediate-Education Secondary	3 years	10, 11 and 12	16 - 18
University Education	4 - 6 years		19 - 23
Higher Education Post-Graduate MA, Ph.D. studies	1 - 3 years		24+

Note. This hierarchy structure of the Libyan Education System was adapted from Bagigni (2016).

According to the above table, children in Libya typically begin their formal education at kindergarten around the age of four or five. Then, they start formal education at primary schools. Basic education in Libya is compulsory and consists of two stages. The first stage is the primary education. It begins at the age of six and lasts for six years. Students remain in the primary education stage until they are 11 years old (Ahmed, 2018; Bagigni, 2016). The second stage, preparatory education, lasts for three years and typically starts at the age of 13 to 15 (Bagigni, 2016). Students are promoted to the next grade if they score at least 50% or higher in each subject. In the third year of their preparatory education, students must undertake public examinations to gain the Basic Education Certificate (BEC) before continuing to secondary education. To qualify for secondary education, students must achieve a minimum overall grade of 65% on their BCE (Ahmed, 2018).

Secondary education marks the final stage of formal schooling, spanning from Year 15 to Year 18 (Bagigni, 2016). According to Ahmed (2018), the first year of secondary school is general, and, in the second secondary school year, students can choose a literary or scientific specialization. Literary students focus on subjects like history, geography, and philosophy, while scientific students concentrate on physics, chemistry,

biology, and mathematics. English is a common subject for both divisions. Each division has its own *English for Libya* textbooks, one for the literary section and one for the scientific section, tailored to its specialization. After completing the third year of secondary school, students take the Secondary Education Certificate Examination (SECE) to earn the Secondary Education Certificate (SEC), which allows them to enroll in university programs (Ahmad, 2018).

According to Ahmed (2018), the academic year in Libya is typically organized into two terms, each spanning four months. During each term, students must undertake both a mid-term and a final examination. To be successfully promoted to the next academic grade, students must achieve a final score of at least 50% in each subject. On the other hand, in the third year of preparatory and secondary education, the academic year is structured into three phases: the first phase, the second phase, and the third phase, each lasting three months. Every phase concludes with a final examination. To obtain the BEC and the SECE at the end of the year, students must score at least 50% of the total marks in each subject, as announced by the Ministry of Education. In any academic year, whether primary, preparatory, or secondary, students who do not meet this threshold in the first-round final examination are given a second opportunity in the second-round examinations. However, those who fail the second-round examination need to repeat the entire academic year, necessitating the retaking of all courses within that class (Ahmed, 2018).

After acquiring the SECE to earn the Secondary Education Certificate (SEC), and the average score for university programs, students earn eligibility for university based on their specialization and average score (Ahmed, 2018). Students who completed the literary route could pursue studies in the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Languages, or the Faculty of Law, while those who completed the Sciences route could enroll in the Faculties of Medicine, Engineering, Sciences, or Economics (Bagigni, 2016).

1.8.6 Higher Education in Libya

Universities are a significant stage of education in Libya. Those who complete their secondary education can pursue higher education at a university. According to El-Hawat (2003) cited in Elabbar (2017), based on the guidelines of the Committee of Higher Education, all universities in Libya have mandated a minimum score of 65% in the national schools' examination since 1990. However, certain faculties like medicine

and engineering have set higher admission standards, requiring scores of over 75%. Students with an average below 65% are directed to higher training and vocational institutes for admission. In line with global standards, academic qualifications are conferred at the undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels in Libya. The universities in Libya are structured around three main fields of study: Arts, Science, Technology, and Medicine. The duration of study varies depending on the discipline, with a Bachelor's degree in Arts typically taking four years, Science requiring five years, and Medicine ranging from five to seven years (El-Hawat, 2003 in Elabbar, 2017).

In all specializations at national Libyan universities, students take General English classes once a week for two hours in their first year, but these classes are often conducted in Arabic because of students' low proficiency in English (Bagigni, 2016; Mohamed, 2016). English courses in all disciplines in Libyan universities are core courses (Elabbar, 2011). Students who wish to specialize in the English language can enroll in English departments at several national Libyan universities. In Benghazi, for example, in the eastern part of Libya, for students interested in pursuing an English language specialization there are three national departments of English, namely: The Department of English at the Faculty of Arts, the Department of English at the Faculty of Languages, and the Department of English at the Faculty of Education where the setting of this study (see *Chapter Three*).

Libyan universities primarily cater to undergraduate students, with recently introducing postgraduate programs in fields like humanities, Arabic language, Islamic culture, and others. Many departments like medicine, pharmacy, and foreign languages, universities offer scholarships to graduates who pursue postgraduate studies abroad, typically in the UK, USA, Canada, and a few other countries, aiming to secure Master's and/or Doctoral degrees (Mohamed, 2016). Recently in 2020, appropriately qualified students can undertake doctoral research degrees (PhD) in the Department of English at the Faculty of Languages at the University of Benghazi.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Before reviewing the literature related to this research topic, it is important to define the key concepts that will be discussed. This step is essential for a clear understanding of the research findings. By clarifying the terminology used in the study, the

communication of the research analysis could be improved. The terms to be defined are as follows:

Reading comprehension: meaningful interpretation of written texts (Nuttall, 1982).

Reading Strategies: Specific approaches and methods that students use to enhance and improve their ability to master new information from a given reading text (Kara, 2015).

A theory: A theory encompasses a collection of interconnected constructs, definitions, and propositions that offer a structured perspective on phenomena by delineating relationships among variables, aiming to elucidate natural occurrences (Kerlinger's, 1979, cited in Creswell, 2007).

An approach: The term *approach* is used to refer to how language learning theories are employed as the source of the way things are done in classrooms (Richards & Rodger, 2014, 2015).

A method: The term *method* refers to the level where theory is translated into practice and decisions are made about the specific skills to be taught. The method is meant to help understand how teachers teach and apply theory in their practice (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, 2015).

Instructions: specific directions, guidelines, or procedures provided by a teacher to students to facilitate learning (Richards & Rodger, 2014, 2015).

Learner-Centered: a multi-perspective teaching instruction focuses on the learners' experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs. It creates a learning environment conducive to learning and promotes the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement (McCombs & Whisler, 1997).

Teacher-Centered: Teaching instruction involves the teacher being at the forefront of the learning process while the student plays a minimal role in language teaching and learning. The teacher has significant control over instruction, and leading classroom activities, and students typically respond affirmatively to teacher inquiries (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

EFL Contexts: This term refers to contexts in which English is used as a foreign language, where it is neither widely used for communication nor employed as the medium of instruction. EFL settings include countries where English is taught as a

foreign language, either as part of the elementary and high school curriculum or in private schools and other educational institutions (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

ESL Contexts: This term refers to contexts in which English is taught and learned as the predominant language of communication at work, in school, and in the community in general (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

1.10 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is structured into five chapters, each serving a distinct purpose in the presentation and analysis of this research:

Chapter One: Gives an overview of the main points of the research, including the reasons for the study, the problem being addressed, the goals, its importance, and the research questions. It sets the stage for the following chapters and describes the Libyan context where the study took place. This helps readers understand the factors that have affected teaching and learning of reading in Libya.

Chapter Two: Provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature on reading skills, encompassing its importance, definition, processes, aspects, types, and strategies. It also examines the role of reading in language teaching and learning, along with the primary theories, approaches, and methods employed in classroom reading practices. Furthermore, the chapter discusses all relevant literature about the reading skill and strategies, including related studies in the field that have contributed to a deeper understanding of this essential skill. This review establishes the theoretical foundation for the study and informs the research design.

Chapter Three: It delves into the methodological framework employed in this study. It focuses on the methods used in this study. It examines the research methodology, including the scope, population, overall strategy, approach, paradigm, and design. It also discusses the research methods, and data collection tools employed. By exploring these components, this chapter explains the systematic approach taken to meet the research objectives and ensure the validity of the findings.

Chapter Four: This chapter focuses on analyzing data collected through quantitative research methods. The results are presented and discussed to provide insights into the research findings.

Chapter Five: This final chapter summarizes the key findings of this research and highlights the significance of the study. It discusses how these findings relate to existing literature, noting both areas of agreement and disagreement. Conclusions are drawn based on these findings. The chapter concludes with a restatement of recommendations for teachers, learners, decision-makers, and future research. This serves as a call to action for stakeholders involved in English language teaching and learning in general.

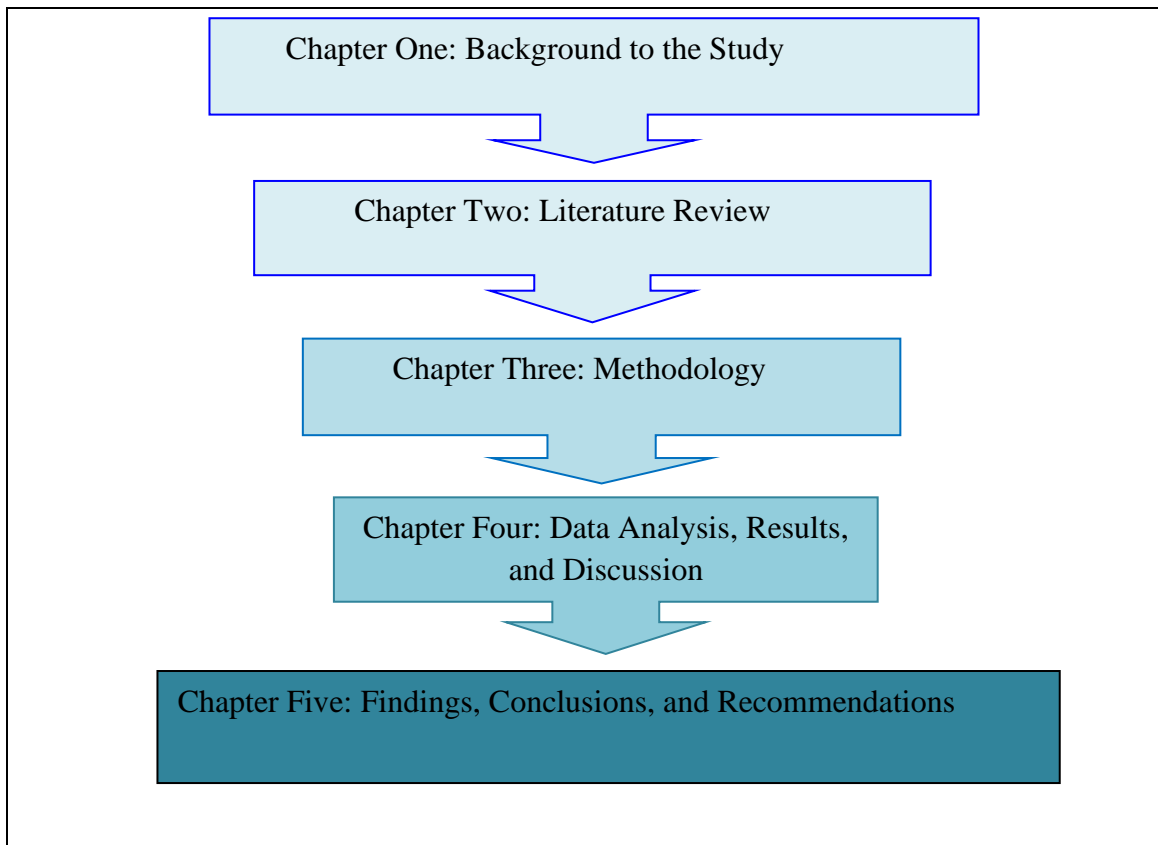


Figure 1: Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review pertinent to the current study, focusing on the reading skill from two relevant dimensions. The first dimension explores the reading skill itself, providing an in-depth understanding of its various aspects, underlying assumptions, processes, types, purposes, and strategies. The chapter describes the characteristics of successful readers and identifies what constitutes successful reading. The second dimension of this literature review concentrates on the role of reading in language teaching and learning. It presents various theories of language, highlighting their advantages and drawbacks. Additionally, it discusses approaches to reading and their implementation in the classroom through diverse teaching methods. It is worth noting that relevant studies on reading comprehension strategies are presented throughout different sections of this chapter.

2.2 Defining Reading Comprehension

Defining reading has long been a controversial issue among educators. The challenge in establishing a clear definition arises from the necessity of considering two distinct perspectives: the cognitive view, which sees reading as an internalized psychological process, and the socio-constructivist perspective, which highlights the social context in which knowledge is constructed. From a cognitive standpoint, reading is understood as a complex meaning-making process that occurs within the reader's mind, where background knowledge and prior experiences play a crucial role. This perspective posits that readers' knowledge is not only powerful but also individualistic and adaptable, as noted by Alexander and Fox (2004). As a result, schema theory has emerged, suggesting that reading involves both top-down and bottom-up processes, wherein readers actively engage with texts by leveraging their existing knowledge to interpret new information. In contrast, the socio-constructivist view, influenced by theorists such as Piaget (1972) and Vygotsky (1978), highlights the importance of social interactions and the external environment in shaping how readers construct meaning. This approach underscores that reading is inherently collaborative, particularly in second language acquisition contexts (EFL and ESL contexts), where cooperative efforts significantly enhance comprehension. Thus, this section aims to present various definitions of reading that have been adopted by numerous scholars, each reflecting their individual

perspectives on the concept of reading. The discussion culminates in a specific definition of reading that has been adopted for this study.

Reading is simply defined as the interpretation of a written message (Lui, 2010). It is an interactive process between the reader and the written text (Alderson, 2000; Blair et al., 2007; Cook, 2005; Nuttall, 1982). A number of definitions of reading comprehension has been proposed to emphasize that reading extends beyond merely uttering words and sounds. For instance, Hill (1979, p. 4) succinctly notes that reading is "what the reader does to get the meaning he needs from contextual resources." Similarly, Goodman (1996) in Banditvilai (2020, p. 47) defines reading as "an active process in which readers use effective strategies to extract meaning." Most of those researchers agree that reading is an active cognitive process through which readers interact with written texts. It is not merely the decoding of written symbols; rather, it involves understanding the meanings behind them.

In addition, Nuttall (1982), defined reading as the meaningful interpretation of written verbal symbols. The definition suggests that reading is a product of the interaction between recognizing graphic symbols that symbolize language and the reader's language proficiency, cognitive abilities, and knowledge (Nuttall, 1982). While reading, readers build meanings of what they read in the light of their background knowledge, as Nunan (2003, p. 68) puts it "reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their background knowledge to build meaning and the goal of reading is comprehension." *Figure 2* presents Nuttall's definition to the reading process mechanism and its relationship to the text, reader's strategies, and fluency.

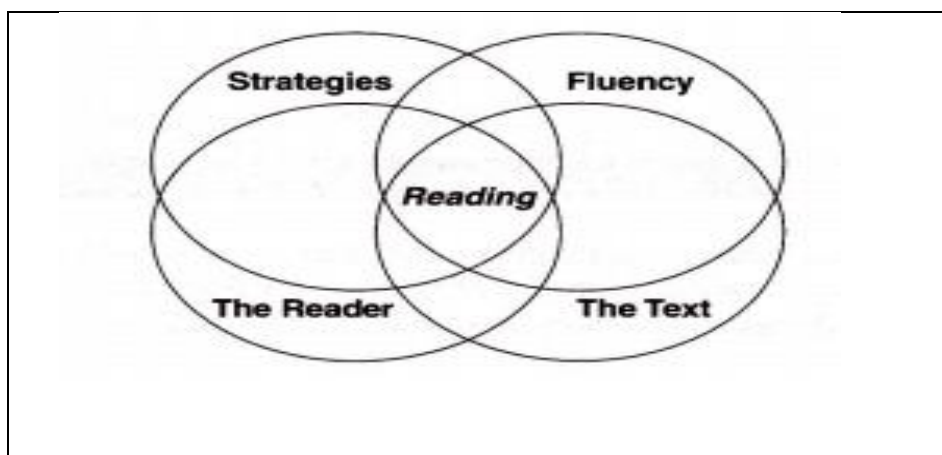


Figure 2: Nunan's Definition of the Reading Skill (Nunan, 2003, p. 72)

Nunan's definition of reading as an integrative active process involving the reader's strategies, fluency, and the reading text aligns with the perspectives of Cook (1991), Goodman (1988), and Snow (2002). These scholars view reading as a dynamic activity in which the meaning of a text is not solely derived from the sentences themselves but is also influenced by the prior knowledge stored in the reader's mind and the processes through which the reader engages with the text. This interaction enables readers to extract and construct meaning, beginning with the writer's representation and culminating in the reader's understanding of the intended message. The writer conveys a message through written text, while it is the reader's responsibility to comprehend and recognize that message using specific strategies. Thus, reading is fundamentally an interactive process that requires both cognitive engagement and effective strategy use to achieve comprehension.

Furthermore, Alderson (2000) provided a more precise definition of reading, identifying it as consisting of two major components: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the ability to perceive the relationship between written symbols and spoken language. Conversely, comprehension involves understanding words, sentences, and coherent texts (Alderson, 2000). This means that readers recognize written words, assign meanings to them, and use these meanings to grasp the overall intended message of the text. Alderson's definition was in line with that of Pang et al. (2003), who argued that reading is a multifaceted process comprising two interconnected components: perception and cognition, which they considered fundamental for readers to develop comprehension skills.

The ultimate objective of reading is comprehension (Harmer, 2007). It begins with interpreting the literal meaning of a text and culminates in understanding the intended message conveyed through graphical language. Readers' engagement with the interpretation of the text is influenced by their previous experiences, language background, and reading purpose (Murica, 2001). Consequently, comprehension is shaped by an individual's prior knowledge and experiences. This understanding has prompted several researchers, including Firth and Wagner (2007), Gee (2001), Glenberg (1997), and Kramsch (2002), to expand the definition of reading beyond a purely cognitive internal process reliant on individual abilities. They argue that reading is fundamentally a social process that involves meaning-making through social interactions, which cannot be achieved through individualistic thinking alone. These

scholars contend that there should be no strict division between language use (the social aspect) and language acquisition (the individual cognitive aspect), as the acquisition of knowledge is significantly influenced by social activities and engagements. They emphasize that social interaction is integral to the development of reading skills.

According to Gee (2001) and Glenberg (1997), the meaning of any linguistic expression is tied to what individuals can do with that language, suggesting that meaning is not abstract but rather grounded in personal experiences and social contexts. These experiences are stored in the brain as dynamic and evolving representations related to one's perception of the external world, personal states, and emotions. Consequently, individuals utilize these experiences to interpret and assign meaning to what they read. From this perspective, the meaning derived from a reading text is shaped by actual contexts that encompass not only surrounding words but also the purposes, values, and social interactions relevant to understanding the current situation (Gee, 2001; Glenberg, 1997). Therefore, reading comprehension must extend beyond the internal relationships of words within a text; it should be rooted in simulations of actions and interactions within real social contexts.

Researchers in SLA such as Ahmadi et al. (2013), Ahmadi and Gilakjani (2012), Alkhaldeh (2010), Grabe and Stoller (2002), Hollenbeck (2013), Hudson (2007), Lipka and Siegel (2012), Sahin (2013), and Zoghi et al. (2011) have posited that reading is a complex process that presents challenges for both EFL and ESL students. Many learners perceive reading as a difficult skill to master, as they struggle to uncover and comprehend the messages conveyed through written texts. This difficulty has significant implications for their overall learning development. Agbo et al. (2019) clarified that the complexity of reading comprehension hinges on various aspects of the skill itself, which may often go unnoticed. For instance, learners' understanding of a text's intended message gradually develops throughout the reading process: predictions are confirmed by subsequent information, ambiguous vocabulary is clarified by context, and inferences are linked to the underlying connotative meanings of the text's words. All of these processes require the ability to connect different parts of the passage to construct an accurate interpretation of the message. Agbo et al. (2019) adds that reading necessitates several cognitive abilities: maintaining information in memory, interpreting cues from sentence structure and punctuation, rapidly scanning backward and forward to locate relevant words and phrases, among other skills. Reading demands a

considerable amount of critical thinking, analysis, inference, interpretation, and assessment of the writer's perspective presented in the text (Agbo et al., 2019). Consequently, it is this complexity that makes reading particularly challenging for many learners.

This section concludes by noting that various scholars have provided their interpretations of reading comprehension. Some view it primarily as a cognitive interaction between the reader's mind and written texts, while others, from a socio-constructivist perspective, consider reading comprehension to be a process in which readers engage in social interactions and collaboratively utilize their background knowledge to construct meaning from the text. The researcher of this study adopts a multidisciplinary perspective on reading skills, integrating both cognitive and socio-constructivist approaches. Thus, reading is understood as a cognitive and interactive mental process that occurs when learners actively engage with their environment, including materials, peers, and teachers. This definition is based on the assumption that mental growth occurs as learners interact with their surroundings (Pigat, 1983) and activate their background schema to comprehend reading texts (Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; McKay, 1987). Readers must construct their understanding and meaning by actively engaging with the content (Richardson, 1997). This multidisciplinary view of reading responds to the need for a developmental definition that considers various perspectives as combined rather than opposing or inconsistent elements within a complex whole (Alexander & Fox, 2004). The researcher's definition of reading aligns with Bhan's (2010, p. 4) perspective, which describes reading as the simultaneous process of "reading the lines," "reading between the lines," and "reading beyond the lines." It also corresponds with the broader definition of reading presented by Blair et al. (2007, p. 437), which states that "reading is an interactive process consisting of multiple interactions between variables such as the reader's background, classroom context, reading materials, developmental levels, teachers' instructional styles, and learning goals." The adjustments made focus on improving sentence structure for clarity and ensuring consistent terminology throughout the passage.

A comprehensive understanding of reading cannot be achieved without recognizing its components. Scholars have identified two major processes involved in reading: bottom-up and top-down processes. Both are essential for attaining comprehension, which is the

ultimate goal of reading. A detailed discussion of these processes is presented in the following section.

2.2.1 Processes of Reading Comprehension

Reading involves comprehension processes that take place at various levels, from individual words and sentences to larger units like paragraphs and discourse (Saville-Troike, 2012). Readers interpret words presented on the page, retain the information in their working memory, and then incorporate them into their existing mental frameworks to form abstract models and interpretations. Reading involves two main processes: bottom-up and top-down processes (Alderson, 2000; Goodman, 1967; Nassaji, 2003; Saville-Troike, 2012). Whether readers perform these processes separately or integrally during reading is a contentious issue among researchers. This section discusses each process and its contribution to reading comprehension, concluding with the researcher's perspective on how these processes are employed while reading.

The bottom-up step assumes that the process of translating printed letters to meaning begins with those prints (Saville-Troike, 2012). The process begins with the translation of visual graphics into sounds. Therefore, the reader initially distinguishes features of letters, connects these features to their letters, groups letters to identify words, and then advances to sentences, paragraphs, and texts (Vacca et al., 1991). When applying the bottom-up process readers begin to analyze the text starting from the most basic linguistic elements and gradually moving toward more complex ones. That is, the process begins with identifying individual letters, then progresses to understanding words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and finally the overall text.

For Saville-Troike (2012), effective bottom-up processing in reading comprehension hinges on two crucial components: knowledge of the language system and recognition of physical clues. First, readers must possess prior knowledge of the language system, encompassing vocabulary, morphology, phonology, syntax, nonverbal structures, and discourse structures. This foundational understanding enables readers to recognize and interpret the individual components of language, such as word meanings, grammatical structures, and sentence organization. According to Nassaji (2003), in the bottom-up process, reading comprehension is viewed as a hierarchical one, where readers start with the most basic linguistic units and gradually build up meaning. In this process, readers primarily focus on decoding individual words by automatically applying their

knowledge of the language system, including phonetics, word forms, and grammatical analysis of the textual linguistic forms. The reader then relates the meanings of the decoded words to form phrases, which are further combined to create sentences. By assembling these linguistic components, the reader constructs the overall meaning of the text (Nassaji, 2003). Second, readers must be able to interpret physical cues including both graphic and auditory elements. These cues, derived from written text and spoken language, provide additional information that helps readers construct meaning from the text. By combining their prior knowledge of the language system with the interpretation of physical cues, readers can engage in bottom-up processing, gradually building comprehension through the analysis of individual elements (Saville-Troike, 2012).

However, advocates of bottom-up reading processes oversimplify the complex nature of reading comprehension (Carrell et al., 1988), their insufficient consideration of crucial factors such as the influence of contextual cues and the reader's prior experiences in meaning-making was the principal problem of bottom-up assumption. Furthermore, the bottom-up model views reading as an independent process, where the stages of decoding are not interconnected. Alderson (2000) also notes that sub-processes higher up the chain cannot feed back into components lower down, that is, identification of meaning does not lead to letter recognition. This suggests that bottom-up models fail to account for the interactive and recursive nature of reading, where higher-level processes can influence lower-level ones and vice versa (Alderson, 2000).

In top-down processing, on the other hand, reliance is primarily on the reader's prior knowledge and experience to derive meaning from the text. As Saville-Troike (2012) explains readers' engagement in top-down processing begins by applying their higher-level knowledge and experience to the printed text. They start by formulating hypotheses and predictions about the text's content and then work downward to verify these hypotheses using the specific details and language cues in the printed material. This top-down process allows readers to use their existing knowledge as a framework for understanding the text, with the printed stimuli serving to confirm or refute their initial hypotheses. In essence, top-down processing triggers the process of text comprehension from the reader's mind to the actual text, in contrast to the bottom-up approach that builds understanding from the individual language components to the overall meaning (Saville-Troike, 2012).

Goodman (1967) suggests that in the top-down process readers make use of language cues from perceptual input to make predictions. As readers progress through the text, they confirm, reject, or refine their understanding of the meaning. This implies that readers do not comprehend every single element of the text, but rather select specific cues to form predictions. Readers use graphic information only to either support or dismiss hypotheses regarding the meaning (Goodman, 1967). And they typically employ top-down strategies when they possess prior knowledge and adequate language skills related to the text, and when the textual cues can trigger their content schemata (Budiharso, 2014).

Researchers highlight the significant role of prior knowledge in the assimilation of new information. Readers can better comprehend new concepts and ideas when they connect them to their existing knowledge (Carrell, et al., 1988; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Smith, 1972). This perspective has influenced reading comprehension processes, which require the active participation of the reader using background knowledge (Ajideh, 2003). Active reading processing is referred to as top-down processing, which focuses on mental processes informed by prior knowledge. In essence, to grasp texts effectively, readers must consider their previous learning and understanding to interpret the material. Their comprehension is then confirmed or rejected by the information presented in the text during the reading process.

However, applying the top-down process of active reading comprehension in EFL/ESL contexts presents several challenges. Readers often lack the necessary background knowledge to effectively predict content within texts (Goldman, et al., 2007). Further, comprehension can be hindered when the texts used in ESL classrooms do not align with students' expectations or when the language is overly simplistic (Nassaji, 2003). As a result, learners cannot solely depend on their existing knowledge for effective reading comprehension. In response to these limitations, Rumelhart (1977, 1980, 1982) developed an interactive model that emphasizes the importance of cognitive engagement, suggesting that reading comprehension should involve the integration of readers' prior experiences and language knowledge.

The term interactive emphasizes the involvement of readers' earlier knowledge and the textual content (Grabe, 1988). In the interactive process bridges the gap between bottom-up and top-down processing, as both can occur concurrently, engaging the reader in cognitive processes. This concept is known as schema theory. In this view,

both bottom-up and top-down reading processes function responsively to comprehend the text. Readers continuously utilize textual details, ranging from symbolic to semantic, while employing their background knowledge to evaluate the text against their own experiences.

Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) assert that both top-down and bottom-up models are essential for effective reading. They explain that when the content of a text aligns with the reader's expectations through top-down activation, comprehension is likely to succeed. Bottom-up processing allows the reader to notice new information or elements that do not align with their current hypotheses about the text's content or structure. Meanwhile, top-down processing aids readers in clarifying ambiguities and choosing among different possible interpretations of the information presented (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

Most reading research has concentrated on the interactive processing of texts by examining how readers utilize their prior knowledge and experiences during reading (Grabe, 1988). Most studies have explored the interaction between bottom-up and top-down processing while reading (Atwell, 1998; Grabe, & Stoller, 2002; Wilcox & Williams, 1990). These studies emphasize that background knowledge interacts simultaneously or almost in real-time with the text's content during psycholinguistic processing. Additionally, they have confirmed that this psycholinguistic interactive processing engages learners in comparing the text's content with their existing schematic structures to facilitate interpretation. In line with these studies, this current study views reading as encompassing the ability to derive, negotiate, and comprehend meaning through integrative reading processes.

In EFL reading instruction in Libya, it was found that "not all of the lecturers were fully aware of the meaning of top-down, bottom-up, and interactive reading approaches regarding the terminology, even after clarification by the researcher" (Zraga, 2018, p. 208). These findings stem from Zraga's (2018) qualitative study, which sought to address a significant gap in the existing literature by examining the beliefs of Libyan lecturers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and how these beliefs influence their teaching practices. To achieve this, twenty-three unstructured observation sessions were conducted with both male and female lecturers teaching English reading, with each class observed three times, resulting in a total of sixty-nine observed classes. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty lecturers to gather

further insights. Zraga's study underscores the need to enhance awareness among Libyan EFL teachers regarding bottom-up and top-down reading processes so that appropriate adjustments can be made to their reading instruction.

In conclusion, this study adopts an integral view of reading processes. Readers are viewed as simultaneously engaging in bottom-up process, where they derive meaning from the text (whether written or spoken), and a top-down process, where they draw upon their prior knowledge and experiences to comprehend the text. Readers tend to combine these processes to interpret the meanings of contextual texts effectively. The importance of reading in learners' journey is worth discussing in the following section.

2.3 Importance of Reading

Reading is a crucial skill (Cain, 2010). It is the single most important fundamental skill a person can acquire as it serves as the foundation for effective learning in general (Cogmen & Saracaloglu, 2009; Moreillon, 2012). It is an essential skill in language learning and teaching (Carrell et al., 1989; Kara, 2015; Solak & Altay, 2014; Zhang, 2008). It is particularly essential in academic contexts (Solak & Altay, 2014) as it is closely linked to academic success (Dabarera et al., 2014; Logan et al., 2011) which heavily relies on understanding through reading (Hulme & Snowling, 2011). "The ability to read academic texts is considered one of the most important skills that university students of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) need to acquire" (Levine et al., 2000, p.1). Bright and McGregor (1970, p. 52) summarized the importance of reading as "where there is little reading there will be little language learning."

In foreign language learning, reading is the most important skill for obtaining information, exploring, and expanding academic knowledge (Azeroual, 2013; McDonough & Shaw, 2003). According to Robb and Susser (1989), reading has long been a crucial skill in English foreign language situations. In many parts of the world, reading remains the primary skill that EFL learners focus on to expand their knowledge and explore the English language. Melandita (2019) noted the ability to read is vital for EFL learners to develop their proficiency and access critical information in various aspects of life, including work, school, and daily activities. It becomes more essential as learners progress through the educational system of that language (Grabe, 2009). Most EFL teachers task their students with researching specific topics in books or on the

internet, exploring additional materials, or seeking alternative definitions of words. Those EFL teachers expect their learners to demonstrate the ability to identify relevant information, sift through less relevant content, and choose the appropriate information to concentrate on. Proficiency in these sub-skills necessitates that learners possess robust reading comprehension skills (Grabe, 2009).

Reading has a broader impact on the academic learning process, affecting all aspects of education (Gayo et al., 2014). According to previous studies (such as Ahmadi & Hairul, 2012; Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2002), reading is considered an important component of the language learning process. For instance, it can enhance vocabulary and improve other language skills such as speaking and writing (Patesan et al., 2014). It serves as a foundational element for teachers of writing, offering a model for learners to emulate and incorporate into their writing endeavors. Brandl (2002, p.89) noted that "an effective way to engage foreign language (FL) students in an active interactive reading process is also to have them write about what they read." For him, having students write about their reading experiences appears to facilitate reading comprehension. This practice leads to the discovery of the various factors that come into play during the reading process. In other words, when students are asked to reflect on and write about their experiences with the reading materials, it helps them better understand and make sense of what they have read. This writing exercise allows students to uncover and examine the different elements that influence their reading and comprehension. Harmer (1998) argued that reading also serves as a conduit for introducing and teaching new vocabulary and grammatical structures. It is a crucial element in language learning process that significantly influences the all areas of academic learning.

Mart (2012) and Hedge (2003) note that reading plays a crucial role in enhancing learners' speaking skills by providing a foundation for improved verbal communication. Engaging with well-crafted reading text can stimulate dynamic classroom discussions, fostering an interactive and stimulating learning environment for students (Harmer, 1998). Researchers in the field of second language acquisition, such as Sangia (2014), highlight the importance of reading in language acquisition, communication, and the exchange of information and ideas. Additionally, reading aids in strengthening grammar skills, ultimately leading to more accurate and sophisticated speech as learners progress in their language proficiency (Mart, 2012).

Thus, reading is a fundamental skill that holds immense importance for learning and personal growth. It serves as a gateway to discovering new worlds, expanding knowledge, and enhancing cognitive abilities. It improves vocabulary, communication skills, and language learning. It is crucial for academic success, as it lays the foundation for learning other skills. Ultimately, reading cultivates a lifelong love of learning and personal development. There are types of reading each of which fulfils a particular purpose.

2.4 Types of Reading

Based on the various definitions of reading mentioned in the previous sections, and the fact that reading is a dynamic active cognitive process by which readers obtain author's intended message(s), reading can be categorized into various types. The selection of a particular type depends on the specific goals and objectives that readers aim to achieve through this active process. According to Patel et al. (2008), there exist four types of reading which include intensive reading, extensive reading, reading aloud, and silent reading:

1. Intensive reading, under the guidance of a teacher, plays a vital role in enhancing language skills, it involves a detailed examination of reading texts, often within classroom settings (Harmer, 2007). Intensive reading is instrumental in addressing structural challenges, expanding vocabulary, and acquiring idiomatic expressions. Within classrooms settings, intensive reading materials form the foundation for activities where students engage in discussions, analysis, and application of the target language, focusing on the minutiae of the text as emphasized by Harmer (2003). Moreover, through intensive reading, learners independently and actively practice their reading strategies (Hedge, 2003).
2. Extensive reading refers to the practice of reading outside the classroom, often for pleasure or enjoyment, involving a wide range of materials such as novels, web pages, newspapers, and magazines (Harmer, 2007). This type of reading is distinct from intensive reading, which requires a detailed analysis of the text (Harmer, 1998). To foster extensive reading, teachers should encourage students to choose their own reading materials, share their experiences with peers, and provide opportunities for self-directed reading. Patel et al. (2008) suggest that extensive reading materials should be less complex than those used for intensive reading. The primary goal of extensive reading is to enable students to read fluently and

effortlessly in the target language, without relying on teacher guidance, for their own enjoyment.

3. The third type of reading is reading aloud, which plays a vital role in the English teaching process, particularly at the primary level. This practice is essential for developing proper pronunciation and fluency, as it allows young learners to hear and produce the sounds of the language in a guided manner. Reading aloud not only helps students articulate words correctly but also fosters their confidence in speaking and enhances their overall language skills. Moreover, this approach encourages active participation and engagement with the text, making the learning experience more interactive and enjoyable. Neglecting the practice of reading aloud can result in significant challenges for students as they progress to secondary education, where advanced reading and comprehension skills are required (Patel et al., 2008).
4. Silent reading is the fourth type of reading. It is an essential component of English language education. It is utilized to improve students' reading skills by allowing them to absorb a large amount of information silently. Teachers should encourage silent reading once students can read without difficulty. This practice helps learners develop the habit of reading without any audible distractions (Patel et al., 2008). Unfortunately, Libyan EFL lecturers believed that the technique of reading silently is good for students, but they were never seen to apply it in practice because of class size (the number of students in a class is large), and the employed curriculum (Zraga, 2018).

Each type of reading discussed above is typically undertaken for a specific purpose. In other words, the choice of a particular reading approach is determined by the learner's objectives and needs. The different purposes of reading are discussed in the coming section.

2.5 Purposes of Reading

Generally speaking, reading usually practiced for a purpose. "Reading is a reasoning activity whereby the reader creates meaning on the basis of textual clues" (Sangia, 2014, p. 7). That is, reading should have reasons and purposes because someone who reads with a purpose in his mind tends to be more attentive and understanding than those who read with no goals. According to Langan (2002), there are three kinds of purpose for reading: a) adding a factual knowledge, b) increasing the intellectual power, and c)

getting pleasure or entertainment. Hence, there is a variety of reasons why people need to read. They need to read to run every day errands, follow directions or medicine instructions, understand road signs, choose from a restaurant menu, and so on. Additionally, reading can be done simply for enjoyment. People may read a story to relax and enjoy its plot. Different goals for reading are influenced by people's needs, conditions, and situations (Longan, 2002).

Hedge (2003) outlines the objectives of reading during the reading process as follows: a) The ability to read a diverse range of English texts. b) Acquiring language skills to enhance reading capabilities. c) Developing schematic knowledge. d) Adjusting reading styles based on the purpose (skimming, scanning). e) Understanding the structure of English written texts. And, f) evaluating the context of texts. In addition, Roe et al. (2005) highlighted the diverse objectives that readers may have beyond simply comprehending a text. These objectives include reading for pleasure and personal enjoyment, as well as more specific purposes such as improving oral reading skills, practicing particular reading strategies, updating one's knowledge on a specific topic, gathering information to include in oral or written reports, confirming or rejecting predictions made while reading, applying information gained from the text to perform an experiment or complete a task, learning about the structure and organization of a text, and answering particular questions related to the content. These varied objectives demonstrate the multifaceted nature of reading and the wide range of contexts in which it can be employed, from personal enrichment to academic and professional applications. Depending on their individual needs and the specific situation, readers may engage with a text with one or more of these objectives in mind (Roe et al., 2005).

Likewise, reading can be done for purely academic and educational purposes which is what normally happens in language classrooms. Abbott and Wingard (1981) stated that every act of reading inside the classroom should be done for a purpose for both teachers and students. And that students should be familiar with that purpose because having a purpose for reading will enable them to comprehend better and focus more to get the most out of the reading. Sangia (2014, p.1) mentioned that "skilled reading makes students better understand all the material taught." This indicates that reading is the skill by which learners search for the intended message to obtain information, tries to understand the significance of the content, works out the meaning of vague vocabulary, and relates what is read to the existing background knowledge.

To sum it up, reading exists in types, each of which tailored to fulfill specific objectives and purposes within the readers' requirements. Readers engage in this activity to acquire knowledge and gather information that caters to their diverse needs. In order to effectively achieve these objectives, readers in general and learners in particular need to be aware of the different aspects of reading.

2.6 Aspects of Reading

According to Nuttall (1982), to successfully achieve the objectives of the reading comprehension process, students should grasp and comprehend five key aspects and strategies of reading: separating units of sounds (phonemic awareness), associating written forms with their spoken forms (phonics awareness), determining the meanings of new keywords (understanding vocabulary), making inferences, and relating their background knowledge and experiences to understand the main ideas in a reading passage.

2.6.1 Phonemic Awareness

NICHHD (2000) cited in Learning Point Associates (2004, p. 5) defined phonemic awareness as the ability to "focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words." Basically, it is that spoken speech is made up of separate units of sound that are blended together when words are pronounced. For example, recognizing that the word *cat* has three phonemes or sounds /k/ /a/ /t/ is an instance of phonemic awareness (NICHHD, 2000 cited in Learning Point Associates, 2004). According to Nuttall (1982) phonemic awareness is an essential part of the reading process. It increases the learners' reading comprehension achievements. To develop their phonemic awareness, learners are required to distinguish the individual sounds slide into one another as words are spoken, to be able to isolate and blend phonemes, to make connections between the visual word (appears in print) and its meaning, and to access information about the word stored in the brain when the word is encountered (Nuttall, 1982).

2.6.2 Phonics Awareness

Phonics, on the other hand, is the study of the relationship between sounds and spelling, with an emphasis on the regularities that may help the reader" (Nuttall, 1982). The purpose of phonics is to help learners to identify a word in its written form with its spoken form that s/he already knows. According to Weaver (2002), phonics awareness means decoding words. It is based on readers' ability to spell words in a step-by-step

and structured manner, taking phonetics as a starting point. It is believed that students should memorize a series of phonetic rules and apply them when sounding out new words (Weaver, 2002).

Weaver (2002) posits that students should be instructed on the individual letter representations in the English language and how to combine these representations to form words. This approach emphasizes the importance of phonemic awareness and decoding skills in the early stages of reading development. She hypothesizes that once learners have mastered the skill of decoding words, comprehension will naturally follow, as the reader's ability to recognize and interpret written words will provide a solid foundation for understanding the text. However, Weaver (2002) acknowledges that the meaning of the word remains unclear to the learner at this stage, and the subsequent section will explore how learners can associate words with their meanings. This involves the development of vocabulary and semantic skills, which enable readers to connect the written word with its corresponding concept or idea (Weaver, 2002). The Libyan researcher (Elashhab, 2018), examined phonics awareness in the teaching of reading English in Libya through mixed method non-experimental research design and found that the development of EFL sound links, through systematic phonics awareness, was almost absent and that the teachers preferred to teach reading through alphabetic knowledge decoding strategies.

2.6.3 Understanding Vocabulary

Without understanding vocabulary, it is so hard to accomplish any ability of language (Afzal, 2019). Vocabulary can be loosely defined as "any word or group of words with meaning that need to be learned as a whole" (Nuttall, 1982, p. 65). Understanding the vocabulary of a language is a very different endeavor from learning the sounds that constitute that language (Saville-Troike, 2012). While there is a finite set of sounds in any given language, the number of vocabulary items is virtually limitless. Therefore, when practicing reading, learners are likely to encounter unknown words that may hinder their comprehension of the text (Alotaibi, 2022; Saville-Troike, 2012). Learners need to grasp two main types of vocabulary: Function words, which provide grammatical information, and content words, which carry lexical meanings (Saville-Troike, 2012). Function words maintain fixed grammatical meanings throughout reading texts, whereas content words possess both surface dictionary meanings and implicit connotative meanings. Understanding these two types of vocabulary is crucial

for comprehending reading materials, as there is a clear correlation between students' vocabulary knowledge and their reading comprehension (Becker, 1977).

While reading, some unknown vocabulary can be safely omitted without compromising the intended message of the text. However, certain keywords are essential for comprehension, and skipping them may result in a loss of the content's meaning (Becker, 1977). To address this issue, Nuttall (1982) proposed specific techniques for effectively approaching unknown keywords:

First, a hidden meaning of some keywords can be easily inferred by considering the context in which it was mentioned (Ciftci & Uster, 2009). It is the context in which the word occurs that gives a rough idea about its meaning, and with every subsequent occurrence, the meaning becomes a little more obvious. More recently, there are arguments against looking up the meaning of every word in dictionaries as stated by Nuttall (1989) that if readers keep looking up new words, it may actually make them less effective readers. When students interrupt their reading to consult a dictionary, they seriously interrupt their thought processes. Training students to infer meaning of nonsense words from the context gives them a powerful aid to comprehension.

Second, learners need to be able to identify key words of a given text. It is in this case that they're advised to use a dictionary effectively with directions (Nuttall, 1982). Learners have to decide which words are the key ones that must be looked up. It must be indicated that these words must be as few as possible, and looking them up in a dictionary must be done as quickly as possible (Nuttall, 1982).

And third, learners could consciously make use of structural clues to establish the grammatical category of keywords (Saville-Troike, 2012). This tells the learner the kind of meaning to look for. For example, understanding the meaning of prefixes and suffixes (morphological information) is extremely useful in tackling new vocabulary. In conclusion, effectively addressing unknown vocabulary is crucial for enhancing reading comprehension. While some unfamiliar words can be omitted without losing the overall message, certain keywords are essential for understanding the content. Their meanings can be inferred from context, morphological components, or, as a last resort, by consulting dictionaries.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of understanding vocabulary on enhancing comprehension abilities while reading. Though limited

number of participants (23 students), Abugharsa and Elamin (2024) conducted a study to investigate the connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension among Libyan EFL students at Misurata University's Department of English, Faculty of Arts. The researchers developed a reading comprehension test aimed at examining how understanding reading texts correlates with knowledge of vocabulary meanings. The findings indicated a clear relationship between the students' comprehension of two reading passages and their performance on vocabulary-related questions, highlighting the importance of understanding vocabulary in enhancing reading comprehension skills.

Although they lacked practical pedagogical applications for the proposed solutions in their study, Nurmalasari and Haryudin (2021) emphasized the critical role that vocabulary knowledge plays in reading comprehension, highlighting the necessity for targeted vocabulary instruction to help Indonesian students overcome reading comprehension challenges. They conducted descriptive qualitative research that involved administering tests to analyze students' performance during reading assessments, along with utilizing questionnaires. The results revealed specific questions that students found particularly difficult, indicating that their confusion while reading in English was largely attributed to a significant lack of vocabulary knowledge. While the authors proposed media solutions to enhance vocabulary acquisition and increase student motivation, they did not present a concrete pedagogical plan for implementing these media in classroom settings.

Not specifying which strategies learners should practice to increase their vocabulary size, a further study conducted by Al-Khasawneh (2019) aimed to assess the impact of expanding vocabulary knowledge on enhancing reading comprehension abilities among Saudi EFL students. To gather data, the research employed two types of assessments: a vocabulary size test and a reading comprehension test. The study involved 64 male first-year students during the 2018-2019 academic year at King Khalid University. The findings confirmed a significant relationship between reading comprehension difficulties and vocabulary knowledge size, indicating that a larger vocabulary correlated with fewer comprehension difficulties when reading written texts.

2.6.4 Making Inferences

In making inferences learners are expected to comprehend the text by combining clues from the text with their background knowledge make an assumption and draw a conclusion (Kopitski, 2007). They are expected to read with understanding, not only to remember information in the text but also to generate inferences to discover implicit meanings. Fisher et al. (2012, p. 23) stated that "inferring is not wild guessing. Inferences require a sophisticated understanding of the text combined with knowledge about the world." Some researchers have distinguished between text-connecting inferences and gap-filling inferences (Cain et al., 2004). Text-connecting inferences, sometimes called bridging or close-to-the-text inferences; for example, inferences of words' meanings from context clues. Gap-filling inferences, sometimes called knowledge-based inferences, require the reader to activate his background knowledge to get the text's implicit message, and relate text's sentences to each other (Cain et al., 2004). In conclusion, the process of making inferences is a critical component of reading comprehension that enables learners to go beyond the literal meanings of texts. By integrating textual clues with their background knowledge, students can draw meaningful inferences and uncover implicit messages within a given reading text.

2.6.5 Using Background Knowledge

Background knowledge is all the world knowledge that a reader brings to the task of reading, including episodic, declarative, and procedural knowledge, as well as related vocabulary (Dijk, 1978). Reading comprehension is accomplished when an activation between the text and the reader's background knowledge occurs (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1984, cited in Dara, 2019). While reading, learners make use of their background knowledge and the textual cues to build models of the author's intended meaning. This meaning is influenced by students' prior knowledge and experience, and the constructed message may or may not be congruent with the message sent (Harris & Hodges, 1995 in Agbo et al., 2019). The meaning of the intended message is conveyed when students make connections between what they read (the text) and what they know (background knowledge). The more prior knowledge and experience students have about a particular topic, the easier it is for them to connect between what they are reading and what they know. For example, if the learners have limited narrow background knowledge about a reading text, they wouldn't be able to follow and understand it simply because they do not know what the text is about (Harris & Hodges, 1995 in Agbo et al., 2019).

Alderson (2002) mentioned that readers use background information to integrate new information from a reading text into their previously established knowledge. Therefore, an unfamiliar cultural context presented in new vocabulary in a reading text may cause incomprehension if learners do not understand that culture. Moreover, an inadequate knowledge of text type and organization creates an obvious obstacle to learners' mastering of the main ideas of the reading text. Readers can fully understand a text if they are familiar with the text type (Alderson, 2002).

Cook (1991) added that an empty road, for instance, could mean different things to different people on different occasions. For him, it means his family is not home. For his son, it means that his school bus has not yet arrived and for his daughter, it means that the postman is late. Thus, according to Cook, people's background knowledge largely affects the way they interpret what they read. Likewise, Mikulecky (2008) noted that the reader's background knowledge is a crucial factor in the comprehension process. And that reading involves both conscious and subconscious cognitive processes. The reader utilizes various techniques to interpret the intended meaning of the author. This is achieved through analyzing the information presented in the text in relation to their background knowledge and past experiences (Mikulecky, 2008).

Several studies in the field of EFL teaching and learning that have stressed the vitality that learners be aware of these reading strategies and aspects as they form the source of difficulty for most EFL learners in their reading comprehension abilities. Most notable is Zraga (2018) whose study revealed that in EFL reading teaching in Libya, lecturers acknowledged the importance of effectively presenting reading comprehension strategies and techniques in EFL instructions, yet they were often not implemented in practice. The lecturers attributed this disconnect to the influence of their prior teaching and learning experiences on their current pedagogical approaches. The study highlighted that very few EFL Libyan lecturers were observed to ask students to guess meaning from the context while the rest encourage their students to use English-Arabic dictionary when they found that they did not understand the meanings of the words. And that almost all of participants were unaware of the technique of creating mental pictures of what is being read (Zraga, 2018).

Also, Abdul Samad et al. (2017) conducted a research project to investigate the difficulties undergraduate students face in tackling the reading section of TOEFL tests; however, they did not specify how students could overcome these challenges. Data was

collected through the analysis of students' test worksheets and the distribution of questionnaires focusing on reading strategies. The study involved thirty students from the English Education Department at Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The findings revealed five primary reading strategies that students perceived as difficulties: first, making inferences by correctly answering implied detail questions; second, answering stated detail questions accurately; third, using context to understand vocabulary meanings; fourth, answering main idea questions correctly; and fifth, determining the meanings of word parts, which was identified as the least difficult strategies (Abdul Samad, 2017).

In addition, Chawwang (2008) investigated the reading problems faced by 12th-grade Thai students concerning reading aspects such as sentence structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, although the study did not provide solutions for overcoming these difficulties. The research involved 840 students from the English Education Department in the Nakhonratchasima educational regions 1, 2, 3, and 7, with forty students randomly selected from each school, ensuring an equal representation from both science and arts programs. The findings indicated that participants encountered significant challenges with comprehension strategies; notably, few students were able to use information from the passages to make predictions about subsequent content. Less than 30% of the participants could identify the main topic or important ideas within a reading passage. Consequently, these difficulties hindered their understanding of the reading comprehension section of the test, as they struggled to predict outcomes, identify topics and main ideas, infer meanings from context, and organize the ideas presented in the passages (Chawwang, 2008).

Furthermore, Benrabha (2015) examined the reading difficulties faced by EFL Libyan students in comprehension skills, specifically in identifying main ideas, supporting details, implied meanings, the writer's attitude, vocabulary, and conclusions. While the study identified these challenges, it did not provide solutions for how students might overcome them. The participants consisted of 30 Libyan students studying English at various Indonesian universities. This qualitative and descriptive study utilized instruments such as reading tests and questionnaires to gather data. The findings revealed that Libyan EFL students struggle with understanding key aspects of reading, including implied meanings, writers' attitudes, and vocabulary. The researcher emphasized the need for further exploration of students' reading difficulties and

advocated for the development of strategies to assist learners in becoming successful readers.

Also, Elbleazi (2006) highlighted the necessity of practicing and concentrating on reading comprehension skills to address the deficiencies experienced by Libyan EFL students; however, the study did not provide a clear mechanism for implementing these practices in the classroom. The research involved 124 students from the English Department at Al-Fateh University in Sirt, Libya, and aimed to investigate the comprehension challenges faced by fourth-year English language students. Data collection methods included a cloze test, a translation test, and a questionnaire. The findings revealed that students struggled with understanding reading texts due to difficulties in identifying main ideas, making inferences, and comprehending vocabulary. These challenges significantly impeded their overall comprehension of the material.

In conclusion, this section has examined a number of essential reading strategies and aspects that are vital for achieving a comprehensive understanding of written texts. Each of these skills is equally important, enabling learners to engage with different facets of the reading material. Together, these comprehension strategies function in an interconnected manner, helping readers decode both the explicit and implicit messages conveyed by the author. A lack of proficiency in applying these strategies could lead to significant challenges in reading comprehension, hindering a reader's ability to fully grasp the content. It is noteworthy that these core strategies of reading (identifying key vocabulary, inferring meanings from word components, making inferences, recognizing details and main ideas in English texts, and utilizing background knowledge to grasp a text's message) are all examined in this study. This research specifically aimed to identify which reading strategy poses the greatest difficulty for Libyan EFL students in the English Department at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi. Furthermore, the study sought to understand the underlying reasons for these difficulties in basic reading aspects and provide practical solutions to be implemented in classrooms to help overcome these reading challenges.

As has been illustrated above, recognizing reading strategies and aspects are essential for learners to successfully comprehend written English texts. Successful readers are characterized by their ability to understand and analyze texts deeply, employing a range

of skills to decode meaning and engage with the material critically. The following section explores the specific traits that define successful readers.

2.7 Characteristics of Successful and Unsuccessful Readers

Different scholars have varying perspectives on what constitutes a successful or unsuccessful reader. Samuels and Kamil (1988) define the skilled reader as one who can quickly generate predictions about the reading passage using a top-down reading process to comprehend a text within a limited time frame. In contrast, Stanovich (1980) describes the skilled reader as one who can compensate for a lack of reading comprehension by employing higher-level (top-down) processing to lower-level processing, such as using morphological knowledge, which unskilled readers are unable to do. From Stanovich's (1980) point of view, the poor reader is the one who relies on decoding each word to understand unknown words, while the skilled reader may not need to draw on the context due to their extensive vocabulary. In conclusion, the definitions of a successful or unsuccessful reader vary significantly among scholars, highlighting the complexity and multifaceted nature of reading comprehension.

According to Bakken (2009), successful readers are those who possess the ability to actively interact with and predict the content of a text by relating the clues presented in the text to their own background knowledge. They make an effort to employ a variety of techniques and abilities to understand texts (Alotaibi, 2022). They are able to automatically recognize letters and words at the lower-level cognitive processes when reading. At the higher-level cognitive processes, successful readers can effectively relate what they are reading to their prior knowledge, thereby creating a bridge between the written text and their own experiences. In contrast, unsuccessful readers tend to simply read the text without actively engaging with it. They are not automatic in their recognition of letters and words and instead focus on each sound, letter, and word to comprehend the text. Unsuccessful readers are unable to effectively use and link their background knowledge to what they are reading, resulting in a disconnect between the text and their own experiences and understanding (Bakken, 2009).

The determination of whether a reader is successful or unsuccessful is influenced by a variety of factors, including the reader's motivation, knowledge of the text's content, genre, and type of text being read (Bakken, 2009). For instance, a proficient EFL reader who specializes in education may be perceived as a poor reader when encountering a

medical text, as they lack familiarity with the specific medical procedures and terminology. Hedge (1991, cited in Davies, 1995) argued that success in the reading process is closely tied to the reader's purpose for reading, such as whether they are reading for comprehension or language learning. He also introduces the concept of "drive" as an additional category of reading purpose, encompassing reading for meaning, gist, language acquisition, or a combination of meaning and language acquisition. This is because the reader's purpose is not only important for the reading process itself, but also for controlling and directing it (Hedge, 1991 cited in Davies, 1995).

Overall, the key distinction between successful and unsuccessful readers is their ability to actively engage with the text while being aware of the various reading strategies, such as inferring vocabulary meanings, identifying keywords, recognizing grammatical relationships, and making inferences. Successful readers excel at leveraging their prior knowledge and establishing meaningful connections throughout the reading process. The next section explores the strategies employed by successful readers as they approach reading texts.

2.8 Strategies of Reading

The word *strategies* can be loosely defined as "learning techniques, behaviors, problem-solving or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient" (Oxford & Crookall, 1989 in Kara, 2015, p. 20). In the context of reading, these strategies enable readers to effectively engage with written materials, provide insights into their understanding of the task, utilize textual cues, and interpret the content when faced with comprehension difficulties (Block, 1986). Strategic reading, as described by Anderson (2003), involves using various techniques to achieve a specific purpose. Readers who have acquired these reading strategies can understand the what, when, how, and why behind their use, thereby enhancing their reading comprehension (Banditvilai, 2020). Overall, the implementation of these strategies is crucial for equipping readers with the necessary techniques and skills to interpret content and overcome comprehension challenges.

Many researchers and studies in the field of language learning and teaching have stressed the importance of reading strategies in the development of students' reading abilities. Block (1986) emphasized that the consistent application of reading strategies

results in readers developing expertise, enabling them to effortlessly apply the acquired reading skills. Rraku (2013) conducted a study to investigate the impact of utilizing reading strategies on enhancing foreign language reading abilities and found a significant improvement in students' reading skills once they employed these strategies. Similarly, Rashed (2016) examined reading comprehension difficulties among Libyan EFL students at Al-Zawia University and found that many struggled due to inadequate reading comprehension abilities and a lack of reading strategies. In conclusion, the collective findings of these studies underscore the critical role of reading strategies in enhancing students' reading skills and overcoming comprehension difficulties.

Several reading strategies are essential to use during the reading process. Among these, skimming, scanning, and metacognitive strategies are particularly important for this study. These strategies are discussed in detail in the following section.

2.8.1 Skimming and Scanning Strategies

The two most essential reading strategies for learners are skimming and scanning (Brown, 1994). Teaching students how to skim and scan texts is crucial, as these skills are considered the most important reading abilities to be acquired (Harmer, 1998). Focusing on the utilization of skimming and scanning strategies, which are deemed essential for effective reading comprehension, can lead students to achieve better comprehension and increase reading speed (Fauzi, 2018). It is clear that integrating skimming and scanning strategies into reading instruction is vital for enhancing learners' overall reading proficiency.

Skimming is a technique used to quickly grasp the essence or primary concept of a written material (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). This involves swiftly scanning the text to extract main ideas and obtain a general understanding of the content. To achieve this, readers typically read the title, examine the introductory and concluding paragraphs, peruse the first sentence of each paragraph, and identify keywords such as proper nouns and uncommon vocabulary (Medjahdi, 2015). Scanning, on the other hand, is the skill of swiftly pinpointing specific facts and details (Thomas & Farrell, 2009). This technique involves actively searching for keywords like numbers, pronouns, and names that are familiar to the reader. Unlike skimming, scanning delves deeper into the text, focusing on the content within the paragraphs rather than just the headings and sub-headings. It is a selective reading method where the reader seeks out particular

information without reading the entire text (Thomas & Farrell, 2009). Both skimming and scanning are essential reading strategies that serve different purposes, with skimming providing a broad overview and scanning allowing for the precise location of specific information.

Skimming and scanning play a pivotal role in navigating the complexities of various reading tasks. Readers and learners, in particular, must possess a keen awareness of how to effectively integrate these reading strategies with the different aspects of the text they engage with. Fauzi (2018) conducted a study that highlighted the effectiveness of skimming and scanning strategies in improving reading strategies. The study demonstrated how the application of reading strategies could significantly enhance reading comprehension and efficiency. The followings are the main points proposed in his study:

- Identifying the purposes and organizational patterns of the text: By utilizing the techniques of skimming and scanning, readers can effectively differentiate between the overarching objective of a passage and the intentions behind specific sections within it. Additionally, they can recognize key terms that reinforce the main idea of the passage, determine how the text is structured by understanding the relationships between different points, and identify transition words that signal the different organizational formats used (Fauzi, 2018).
- Understanding unfamiliar vocabulary from structural clues and word parts: Skimming and scanning enable learners to understand unknown vocabulary through structural clues and word parts (Barnhart, 2008). By employing various structural clues, such as punctuation, restatement, and examples, students can make educated guesses about the meanings of unfamiliar words within a limited timeframe. Additionally, scanning the text enables students to identify the meaning of unknown words by analyzing the prefixes, suffixes, and roots present within the word. (Barnhart, 2008).
- Inferring information from the text: Understanding unfamiliar words is crucial for individuals seeking to grasp the concepts presented in written texts. Authors often incorporate unfamiliar or infrequently used words in their writing to convey specific meanings. By examining structural clues like punctuation, restatements, and examples, readers could infer the meanings of unknown words quickly. Therefore,

developing the strategy to comprehend unknown words within texts without relying on a dictionary is essential for all readers (Fauzi, 2018).

- Understanding facts and details from the text: There are two categories of information provided in the reading task: those that are true and those that are not about the information presented in the passage. Scanning is a useful technique for understanding facts and details from the passage. Students should utilize scanning by focusing on the topic and main idea, as all facts, details, and the overall structure of the passage revolve around the topic and main idea. Consequently, specific information would provide readers with a clear understanding of the main idea (Katheleen, 1986).
- Defining the author's attitudes, tones, and purposes in the passage: When faced with a reading task that requires identifying the author's attitude or the tone of the passage, readers must carefully consider the entire passage. In certain passages, the author may explicitly convey their feelings towards the topic they have written about. By quickly scanning the text, readers can search for indications of the author expressing emotions, which can help determine the author's attitude and the overall tone of the passage. By skimming the main idea presented in the topic sentence and examining the supporting details readers can easily form conclusions about author's purpose (Fauzi, 2018).

Research on EFL learning has emphasized the effectiveness of reading strategies, particularly skimming and scanning, in developing students' reading comprehension abilities. For example, Zraga (2018) found that Libyan EFL lecturers theoretically supported the use of skimming, believing it would help students obtain the overall meaning rapidly, although none of them were observed applying this technique in their reading classes. In addition, Abosnan (2016) conducted a study focused on the learning and teaching of Reading in English as a Foreign Language (REFL) at Alkufra Libyan Secondary Schools in southern Libya. Using an action research approach, the study critically examined the challenges faced by Libyan EFL students and teachers across four research sites. The diagnosis stage involved data collection through classroom observations, interviews, and think-aloud protocols, revealing that students predominantly engaged in reading aloud and word-level strategies rather than reading for meaning. The intervention phase introduced alternative REFL teaching methods aimed at developing reading strategies to encourage interactive and meaningful reading.

The results highlighted the crucial role of teachers in enhancing students' knowledge, confidence, and REFL strategies. However, the study also acknowledged limitations posed by factors such as students' first language, the idiosyncrasies of the English language, teacher training, and political instability in Libya. Despite these challenges, the study underscored the importance of teaching reading strategies for comprehension, and called for more research to be conducted to investigate the enhancement of reading among EFL students.

Further, Nezami (2012) conducted a study at Najran University in Saudi Arabia to identify the reasons behind the low-level performance of students in the Preparatory Year and Community College programs. Data were collected through a survey using teachers' questionnaires, student observations, and case studies. Her findings indicated that Arab learners (males) at Najran University encountered challenges in comprehending English reading texts due to their inability to properly apply reading strategies such as scanning, skimming, prediction, and summarizing. In conclusion, these studies collectively emphasized the critical role of reading strategies in EFL education and highlighted the need for teachers to actively integrate these strategies into their teaching practices. Therefore, this research was conducted in response to these educational needs.

2.8.2 Metacognitive Strategies

Another type of reading strategy is the metacognitive one. Metacognition, a concept coined by Flavell in the mid-1970s, refers to the process of *thinking about thinking* (Anderson, 2002, p. 23). It involves self-awareness of mental processes (Byrd et al., 2001). According to Oxford (1990), metacognitive strategies provide a way for learners to coordinate their learning process, enabling them to manage and regulate their own learning effectively. In reading, metacognitive strategies are particularly important because reading involves more than just recognizing words; it requires understanding the literal meaning as well as grasping implied ideas (Tierney & Readence, 2005). Effective reading, therefore, necessitates significant cognitive strategies for comprehension (Pressley, 2002a). To achieve this, readers employ various metacognitive strategies such as relating the text to prior knowledge, making predictions, and summarizing. These strategies foster an engaged and self-regulated approach to learning, ultimately contributing to academic success. In the long run, metacognitive strategies play a crucial role in enhancing reading comprehension by

enabling readers to actively manage and regulate their own reading processes, leading to more effective and meaningful engagement with the material.

Metacognition encompasses both metacognitive awareness (what we know) and metacognitive regulation or control (knowing when, where, and how to use strategies; that is, what we can do) (Baker, 2002, 2008). It involves awareness and control of various cognitive processes such as planning, monitoring, repairing, revising, summarizing, and evaluating. This means that learners not only learn strategies that support their comprehension but also learn how to effectively carry out these strategies (Baker, 2002, 2008; Pressley, 2002b). Effective readers are skilled strategy users who employ metacognitive strategies to enhance their reading comprehension. They are able to use a variety of goal-specific tactics, execute a planned sequence, and monitor their use (Adams & Hamm, 1994; Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). Successful readers utilize numerous reading strategies, such as finding their way through the text, organizing information, leveraging linguistic knowledge of their first language when learning a second language, using contextual cues, and learning to chunk language. These readers are proficient in using cognitive strategies efficiently, demonstrating a high level of metacognitive control over their reading processes. In conclusion, metacognitive strategies are essential for effective reading, enabling learners to manage and regulate their cognitive processes to achieve better comprehension and academic success.

Anderson (2002) noted that metacognition is a multifaceted cognitive process that encompasses various forms of attended thinking and reflective processes. This complex phenomenon can be broken down into five fundamental components, each of which plays a crucial role in the learning process. Firstly, preparing and planning for learning involves setting goals and establishing a framework for knowledge acquisition. Secondly, selecting and using learning strategies enables learners to choose the most effective methods for absorbing and retaining information. Thirdly, monitoring strategy use allows learners to assess their cognitive processes and adjust their approach as needed. Fourthly, orchestrating various strategies involves integrating different learning techniques to achieve optimal results. Finally, evaluating strategy use and learning enables learners to assess their progress and refine their approach over time. Effective teachers should model these strategies in reading activities for their students, providing a comprehensive framework for learners to follow in each of these five key areas (Anderson, 2002).

The impact of metacognitive strategies on developing students' comprehension abilities has been a significant concern for many researchers in language teaching and learning (Bagga & Mckee, 2023; Chen et al., 2022; Eyupoglu, 2023; Martin-Ruiz & González-Valenzuela, 2022; Samarajeewa, 2023). In the Libyan context, Ghwela et al. (2017) conducted a study to elucidate the metacognitive reading strategies utilized by female first-year university students studying English as a Foreign Language. The study, which involved forty students at Al-Asmariya Islamic University in Zliten, Libya, used the Metacognitive Awareness Reading Strategy Inventory (MARSI) to collect data. The questionnaire responses were quantitatively analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the level of metacognitive awareness across three sub-scales: global reading strategies, problem-solving reading strategies, and support reading strategies. The results indicated a high level of metacognitive awareness for the problem-solving strategy ($M=3.50$, $SD=1.36$), but only a medium level for both the support strategy ($M=3.25$, $SD=1.36$) and the global strategy ($M=3.08$, $SD=1.26$). These findings highlighted the importance of metacognitive reading strategy instruction in enhancing students' metacognitive awareness, ultimately leading to improved reading comprehension performance and the development of skilled readers.

Also, Etwaeel (cited in Omar, 2020) investigated the effectiveness of metacognition in enhancing students' reading comprehension in Libyan secondary schools in Ajdabyia, Libya. The study aimed to identify the challenges encountered by EFL teachers in Libya when teaching reading comprehension and to propose solutions to mitigate these challenges. To achieve this, the researcher employed three investigative methods: questionnaires, classroom observations, and student tests (pre-test and post-test). The data analysis from the teachers' questionnaires and classroom observations revealed that EFL teachers face significant difficulties in teaching reading comprehension. However, the study indicated that instructing students in modern reading comprehension strategies, particularly metacognitive ones, had a substantial impact on enhancing and advancing reading comprehension. This instruction enabled students to become strategic and independent readers. In conclusion, the study highlighted the importance of teaching metacognitive reading strategies to overcome the challenges in reading comprehension faced by Libyan EFL students and teachers.

To put it all together, the above sections have presented the first dimension of the literature review, providing a comprehensive overview of the reading skill and its

components. Various definitions of reading were discussed to clarify its dynamic cognitive nature and the internal processes readers use to achieve a full understanding of the messages embedded in reading texts. The importance of reading for learners' development and academic success in EFL contexts, as well as its relevance for teachers' instruction on other language skills, was highlighted. Different types of reading were examined, revealing that the choice of type depends on the purpose of reading. Readers engage with texts with specific purposes in mind, which vary according to their needs. The aspects of reading are crucial, and readers must be aware of them to accomplish their reading goals and objectives. The differences between successful and unsuccessful readers were identified, with success depending on readers' ability to effectively employ various reading strategies, such as predicting, activating background knowledge, and making suitable inferences.

By exploring the concept of reading skills from multiple angles (including definitions, processes, types, purposes, aspects, and strategies) a comprehensive understanding of how reading fits into the broader context of language teaching and learning can be gained. The importance of reading in language learning and teaching has been widely recognized. Over time, different theories have approached reading from diverse perspectives, highlighting its active and dynamic nature. Understanding the place of reading in language teaching and learning theories is crucial for appreciating its significance and developing effective teaching methods for language learners. These issues are thoroughly explored in the subsequent sections presenting the second dimension of the literature review of this study.

2.9 The Place of Reading in Language Teaching and Learning

Reading has gained a central place in language teaching and learning, underscored by its critical role as the most essential skill among all language competencies (Cain, 2010). It is the single most foundational skill that a learner can acquire, serving as the basis for the development of other language skills (Cogmen & Saracaloglu, 2009; Moreillon, 2012). Many scholars have emphasized that reading is a skill closely linked to academic success (Dabarera et al., 2014; Logan et al., 2011). The central place and role of reading in language teaching and learning are succinctly captured by Bright and McGregor (1970), who asserted that "where there is little reading, there will be little language learning" (Bright & McGregor, 1970, p. 52). This statement highlights the fundamental importance of reading in the language learning process.

The significant place of the reading skill in language teaching and learning lies in the fact that it is the receptive skill often used to enhance other productive skills (writing and speaking) to achieve educational aims (Harmer, 2007). That is, it is crucial for teaching writing as it provides a good model for English written texts to practice vocabulary, grammar, or punctuation. Reading material can be used to demonstrate ways to construct sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts. Drawing from Mart's (2012) perspective, reading in the process of language teaching and learning enhances speaking. The act of reading plays a pivotal role in augmenting oral proficiency. Through consistent engagement with a wide array of written materials students can significantly enhance their verbal communication skills. Further, by familiarizing them with a substantial volume of printed vocabulary and linguistic structures students' linguistic repertoire will be expanded (Mart, 2012). Sangia (2014) emphasized that reading is crucial for language learning, communication, and sharing information and ideas. It can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion, excite the imagination, and provide the springboard for fascinating lessons (Harmer, 2007).

Recognizing this pivotal role of reading within the domain of language teaching and learning, it gained different degrees of importance in theories of language teaching and learning, and many of those, in turn, proposed different approaches to the practice of reading in different educational settings.

2.10 Key Theories for Teaching and Learning Reading

Understanding the underlying theoretical assumptions for teaching and learning reading improves learners' education; theories of language learning form the educational base for practicing teaching in learning contexts (Hoy et al., 2013). "A theory is a comprehensive, coherent, and internally consistent system of ideas about a set of phenomena" (Knowles et al., 2020, p.11). A language theory encompasses a collection of interconnected constructs, definitions, and propositions that offer a structured perspective on phenomena by delineating relationships among variables, aiming to elucidate natural occurrences (Kerlinger's, 1979 cited in Creswell, 2007). Any language teaching and learning approach needs to be firmly grounded on theories of language teaching and learning (Richard (2015).

According to Hoy et al. (2013) and Richard (2015), different theories of language teaching and learning have emerged aiming to understand the complex phenomenon of

learning a subsequent language. These language learning and teaching theories draw on learning theories from other fields, such as psychology, cognitive science, and sociopsychology, as well as from the findings of second language research. Hoy et al. (2013) and Richard (2015) note that due to the complexity of learning as a cognitive process, there is not one definitive explanation for how learning occurs. Various theories of learning provide explanations that vary in their usefulness depending on the specific aspect of learning being addressed. That is, for an accurate adequate understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of the learning process, all theories should be taken into consideration since "no single theory of second language acquisition can be expected to provide a complete understanding of it" (Atkinson, 2011 cited in Richard, 2015, p. 31).

In light of the above quotation, this study adopted a multidisciplinary perspective for understanding the reading comprehension process. Reading, in this study, was conceptualized as an integrated cognitive and constructivist phenomenon. The researcher has embraced a multidisciplinary view of reading that integrates schema theory with constructivist learning theory. This approach posits that reading involves activating schemas to comprehend texts (Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; McKay, 1987) and emphasizes the construction of meaning as outlined in constructivist theory. Learners should be provided with opportunities that facilitate interactions, focusing on their ability to construct their understanding and meaning through active engagement with the content (Richardson, 1997). Our perspective on reading aligned with Bhan's (2010) view, which describes reading as a simultaneous process involving "reading the lines," "reading between the lines," and "reading beyond the lines." Additionally, it recognized that reading is an interactive process consisting of multiple interactions among variables such as the reader's background, classroom context, reading materials, developmental levels, teachers' instructional styles, and learning goals (Blair et al., 2007).

In the following section, several influential language learning theories are examined about their implications for language teaching. Each theory is characterized by its distinct views of language and learning, which are then linked to specific methods for teaching and learning. The theories are discussed in relation to the context of the reading skill's development and their proposed assumptions on how the practice of reading should be approached in classrooms. Theories considered include Behaviorism,

Cognitivism, Skill-Based and Performance-Based approaches, Interactional theory, Constructivism, and the Vygotskian theory for language teaching and learning. By analyzing these theories and their associated methods, this section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how different theoretical perspectives have shaped the practice of teaching reading in educational settings.

2.10.1 The Behaviorism

One of the learning theories that had an essential impact on many fields of teaching, including language teaching is the behaviorist theory. A theory that states that human and animal behavior can be studied only in terms of physical external processes, without reference to the mind (Richard, 2015). For behaviorists, learning is based on the view that it is a process in which specific responses are acquired in response to specific stimuli (Brown, 2007; Quinn, 2000; Richard, 2015). Correct responses are reinforced and, hence, become a learned behavior. Thus, learning, in this theory, is based on the Stimulus-Response theory of psychology which views learning as habits formation, through repetition and reinforcement (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Saville-Troike, 2012).

According to Richards (2015), the behaviorist theory provided the theoretical support for the audiolingual method of language teaching in classrooms (see section 2.9.1.1.3). Teaching reading, in this method, was through extensive drilling, practicing, repetition, and making use of activities that minimized the chances of producing mistakes. Drilling, mimicry, and memorization of sentences were the bases for teaching and learning how to read. These behavioristic principles also formed the base for teacher-centered teaching that views learning as a change in behavior, promoted by dependent learning. Learners are evaluated based on their ability to reproduce the memorized materials and this behavior is, in turn, reinforced by grades awarded and controlled by their teachers (Conti, 2004).

In a typical reading lesson, the teacher would read aloud a sentence from the passage, and students would then repeat it verbatim, if a student made a pronunciation mistake, the teacher would immediately correct it, and s/he would be required to repeat the sentence correctly until mastery was achieved (Abosnan, 2016). This approach, grounded in behaviorist principles, emphasizes the role of repetition and reinforcement in learning. However, Brown (2007) questions the effectiveness of this method in fostering reading comprehension, as the focus is on memorizing the text and correcting

pronunciation errors rather than addressing understanding and solving comprehension problems.

According to Skinner (1986), a key aspect of behaviorism is the use of reinforcement, which involves carefully structuring "contingencies of reinforcement" to quickly modify behavior and maintain it over extended periods. Skinner believed that students' ability to learn rules could be significantly enhanced by following the teacher's guidance and feedback. The teacher, in this theory, plays a crucial role in facilitating the learning process and shaping the students' understanding of the material. The research conducted by Conti (1985) and Zohrabi et al. (2012) supports Skinner's (1986) assertion regarding the importance of the teacher's controlling role in the learning process. These studies emphasize the significant influence the teacher's guidance and feedback can have on the students' ability to learn and apply the necessary rules and concepts. The behaviorist theory in learning reading primarily focuses on improving observable behaviors, such as grammar and phonology, while neglecting other important components like cognitive processes and background knowledge (Richard, 2015). Samuels and Kamil (1988) suggest that behaviorist psychology treats reading as a word-recognition response to printed words, with little emphasis on the cognitive processes that allow the reader to make sense of the text. In other words, the behaviorist approach tends to ignore top-down reading processes and interactive reading strategies, instead concentrating on the visual stimuli from the printed page, which may be more aligned with aspects of bottom-up reading processes (Abosnan, 2016). This narrow focus on observable behaviors at the expense of higher-order cognitive and interactive skills is a key limitation of the behaviorist perspective in the context of reading instruction.

From the behaviorist perspective, mistakes and errors made by EFL students are attributed to interference from their L1; consequently, the immediate correction of these errors is seen as crucial (Fasold & Connor-Linton, 2006). This theoretical stance suggests that to effectively teach a reading passage, EFL students should be able to transfer their existing reading behaviors, such as knowledge of sentence and word structure, from their L1 to the FL. Saville-Troike (2012) further elaborates on this theory, noting that where there are similarities between the L1 and FL, learning occurs more easily, and errors are less frequent. Conversely, where there are differences between the two languages, learning becomes a more challenging task, and errors occur more continuously due to L1 interference (Saville-Troike, 2012).

The behaviorist theory suggests that, in reading classes, the teacher is primarily responsible for structuring learning outcomes and creating an appropriate learning environment (Tauber, 2007). Within this framework, the teacher is seen as a transmitter of knowledge and a controller of the learning process, while the student is viewed as a passive recipient with minimal interaction with the learning itself. Staples (2007) further elaborates that the teacher controls the reading freedom of the student in classrooms. This aligned with the predominant practices observed in Libyan classrooms today, where the teacher maintains a central role in directing and controlling the learning experience (Abosnan, 2016; Ahmed, 2018; Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015; Algwil, 2023; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021). The Behavioristic principles also formed the base for teacher-centered teaching that views learning as a change in behavior, promoted by dependent learning (Conti, 2004).

This theory of language learning was heavily criticized due to its limitations. Firstly, it views learning as a mere change in behavior resulting from experience, disregarding the mental processes involved in thinking (Hoy et al., 2013). Secondly, research in second language acquisition showed that learners from diverse backgrounds use similar simple structures, and not all errors are caused by first language interference (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Thirdly, it views students as passive entities with limited autonomy to pursue independent learning or interact with the material in meaningful ways (Farrell & Jacobs, 2010). According to Farrell and Jacobs (2010), students should have the opportunity to explore their understanding either on their own or in collaborative settings. Fourth, strong criticism of the behaviorist theory is raised from Constructivist theorists, who advocate for student-centered methodologies, as they believe that knowledge and meaning are individually constructed by students throughout their learning journeys (Buzzetto-More, 2007).

As a result, advocates of cognitive theories of language teaching and learning, first introduced by Noam Chomsky in 1959, rejected behaviorism in favor of more comprehensive explanations. Chomsky's influential theory posited that language learning is an internal cognitive process occurring within the mind, rather than solely driven by external factors.

2.10.2 The Cognitivism

In this theory, language learning is viewed as a cognitive process. According to Lightbown and Spada (2006), language learning is an internal, mental activity where the learner builds their understanding of language through exposure and experience. Cognitive approaches to learning emphasize the role of the mind, as Richards (2015) asserts that the mind is an integral component of the language learning system. It serves as the source of cognitive operations that process, comprehend, and extract linguistic knowledge from the input received during language learning.

Atkinson (2011) emphasized that there are several fundamental assumptions associated with cognitivism. These assumptions include: First, the mind functions like a computer, taking in information, processing it, and producing an output. Second, the mind serves as a repository for mental representations, storing internal representations of language input. Third, language learning involves the acquisition of abstract knowledge, specifically the rules that underlie linguistic performance. These cognitive assumptions are reflected in some important applications of teaching students how to learn and remember by using cognitive learning tactics such as note-taking, mnemonics, and visual organizers (Hoy et al., 2013).

The Cognitivists view of language learning and teaching is seen in the theories of universal grammar, schema theory, restructuring, and explicit and implicit learning:

- **Universal Grammar:** This theory suggests that learners come to language learning with an innate ability for language learning that is activated by exposure to language in the environment (Chomsky, 1959). Language is an internalized biological system rather than a social one (Cook, 2007). This system is separate, from and relatively influenced, by outside experience (Cook, 2007). According to Richards (2015), language learners develop an interlanguage system that is distinct from the input they receive. This interlanguage system emerges through the process of abstracting rules and principles, as well as the use of an internal mechanism, known as the language acquisition device, which enables learners to create a developing grammar. Errors, here, were not viewed as faulty learning but were an indication of a creative process of learners' attempts for language knowledge. Teachers were encouraged to spend less time on correcting errors, and more time on providing rich, meaningful input for learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Although more general psychological and

social theories have emerged to add to our understanding of language learning (see the subsequent sections), this cognitive theory is still a part of the contemporary SLA world.

- **Schema Theory:** "Schema (plural: schemas or schemata) refers to the background knowledge that underpins the interpretation of a text" (Cook, 1991, p. 54). When reading, learners rely on their existing background knowledge to process and understand new information. Schema theory emphasizes the significant impact of prior knowledge on reading comprehension, as it provides a framework for organizing and making sense of new information. This concept is supported by Rumelhart (1980), who notes that schemata encompass all levels of human experience and embed all generic knowledge. When readers process a text, they unconsciously or consciously link new information to their previous knowledge. As they encounter words, phrases, or sentences in a passage, the associated images and concepts in their minds are triggered or activated (Rustipa, 2010). This background knowledge varies from person to person. In practice, schema theory highlights the importance of pre-reading activities in preparing students to understand written texts. Teachers should help students build schemata around the topic or activate existing ones (Johnson & Hudson, 1982, cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). This theory ensures that students can effectively integrate new information into their existing knowledge frameworks.

The schema theory suggests that written texts do not have inherent meaning for readers, instead, readers must connect their pre-existing knowledge and experiences (background knowledge) to the content of the text to comprehend and interpret it effectively (Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; McKay, 1987). The specific information required for understanding texts is referred to as "text schemata", while the general knowledge that readers possess is known as "the reader's background knowledge" (An, 2013).

Schema theory emphasizes the interactive process that occurs between readers' prior knowledge, experiences, and the content of the text they are reading (an interactive view of the bottom-up and top-down processes). This theory stresses that readers' background knowledge interacts with the text simultaneously or in close succession as they read. Researchers have confirmed that learners actively compare the information presented in the text against their existing schematic structures to comprehend and interpret the text effectively (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Johnson, 1981; Ketchum, 2006; McKay, 1987). The

theory has proposed several schema-theory-based pre-reading tasks/strategies designed to activate prior knowledge, enhance comprehension, and facilitate a deeper engagement with the text, such as accessing background information, making predictions, and asking questions related to the material.

There are three types of schematic knowledge that readers utilize when engaging with and processing textual content through reading activities: content knowledge, cultural knowledge, and formal knowledge (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Nassaji, 2002). Content schema refers to the reader's familiarity with the subject matter of the text, encompassing prior knowledge and understanding of the topic (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). Prior (Background) knowledge includes learners' previous Knowledge that is not necessarily included in the text content. Topic knowledge, on the other hand, pertains to the information that is directly presented within the reading material (Alderson, 2000). Cultural knowledge refers to a reader's familiarity with the cultural information presented in a text. This knowledge is crucial for fully grasping the meaning that the writer intends to convey. When the cultural context of a text differs from the reader's background, it can lead to different interpretations that diverge from the writer's original intent (Johnson, 1981; Ketchum, 2006). The formal schema represents knowledge of the linguistic system. It also encompasses an understanding of text organization and the distinctions between various genres (Erten & Razi, 2009). Different types of texts, such as informative articles, short stories, or poems, convey information in unique ways. When readers are not familiar with the formal structures of these texts, they may encounter challenges in processing and comprehending the material (Carrell et al., 1988; Alderson, 2000). The three types of schematic knowledge presented in this section (content knowledge, cultural knowledge, and formal knowledge) are utilized in the three-stages learner-centered reading model designed in this study (see *Chapter Three*).

- **Restructuring:** Cognitive theories emphasize that new learning is built upon and restructured from already existing knowledge (schema) (Richards, 2015). In the context of learning a subsequent language, the cognitive process of restructuring involves adjusting what has been learned to accommodate new information. As Richards (2015) notes that restructuring involves modifying previously learned information to incorporate new knowledge. This concept suggests that language learning is a continuous process of restructuring previous knowledge to incorporate new knowledge, whether it involves schemata, vocabulary, or grammatical structures. For instance, in reading practice, students might be given a set of

numbered pictures that tell a story. They are tasked with constructing the storyline, understanding the narrative, and writing it down as a readable text. During this process, students encounter various linguistic challenges such as lexical choices, morphological adjustments, and syntactic problems. In addressing these challenges, they are actively restructuring and adjusting their existing knowledge to accomplish the task (Richards, 2015).

- **Explicit and implicit learning:** In this cognitive theory, two kinds of learning are distinguished: Explicit learning and implicit learning. Richards (2015) elaborated that explicit learning is a conscious learning process that leads to knowledge that can be accurately described and explained; while implicit learning is an unconscious learning process that leads to knowledge that the learner may not be able to verbalize or explain. He also clarified these kinds of learning in practicing reading as follows: In practicing reading, typically grammatical rules are presented explicitly. Students practice applying these rules in different texts of their own. It is assumed that, over time, these rules will become part of learners' unconscious implicit knowledge. Richards (2015, p. 37) summarized the relationship between explicit and implicit learning as "some aspects of language may also be acquired implicitly, explicit knowledge can become implicit knowledge, through practice."

Some researchers have expressed concerns that cognitive theories may oversimplify the learning process, overlook concrete behavioral aspects, and potentially neglect the influence of environmental factors on language learning development (Ansari, 2020). In response to these criticisms, alternative theories have emerged that strive to balance cognitive and behavioral perspectives in language learning. One of the most notable among these is the skill-based and performance-based theory, the interactional theory, and the constructivist theory.

2.10.3 Skill-Based and Performance-Based Theory

The skill-learning theory emerged in the 1980s as an alternative to cognitive theories of learning (Ortega, 2009). It is based on the assumption that skills are integrated sets of behaviors that are learned through practice, and they are made up of sub-skills that may be learned separately but are produced together, as a whole, to constitute skilled performance (Ortega, 2009). This theory consists of two major sub-theories: Skill-based learning and performance-based learning:

According to Richards (2015), skill-based learning theory suggests that complex behaviors are made up of a hierarchy of sub-skills. Complex skills, such as how to read a newspaper, and how to understand a written text, can be broken down into individual sub-skills. For example, in reading an English text, recognizing keywords is a sub-skill at a low level that leads to a skill of a higher level which is recognizing the writer's attitude and opinion to the topic. A learner needs to acquire lower-level skills before s/he can use the higher-level skills. These skills are often consciously managed and learned by the learner (Richards, 2015). DeKeyser (2007) emphasized that the concept of skill-based learning is deeply rooted in the notion of practice. Practice involves continuous and repeated opportunities to use language over time. Typically, practice is accompanied by feedback, enabling the learner to gradually enhance their performance. As Cook (2008) observed, language learning encompasses knowledge, behavior, and skills that are developed through practice and repetition. It follows that elements that are highly practiced have the best chance of being noticed, understood, learned, remembered, and employed as exemplars (Cook, 2008).

Performance-based learning, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that skill-based learning can be extended to describe how we 'use' skills in a communicative context, this includes questioning, discussing, elaborating, relating, and negotiating (Atkinson, 2011). As learners practice, their performance becomes more skillful over time. They become more effective users of language, and more skilled at using it in various learning contexts. Richards (2015) noted that in this use-based learning, the focus is on language as a means of communication and discussion. As far as reading is concerned, and during reading classes, language is used for communication between teachers and learners, and among learners themselves, and language is performed through conversation, elaboration, negotiation, questioning, and responding (Richards, 2015). In this theory, the focus is on the use of language, rather than the principles of the abstract systems itself. By performing the activities repeatedly over time, learners become more proficient in using and performing through language. When language is practiced in skill-based activities, learners will be able to successfully perform the same skills on other occasions, and through repetition, learners will automatically perform these skills (Richards, 2015).

According to Ortega (2009), while skills are indeed crucial in learning, this theory may oversimplify the complex nature of the learning process by emphasizing the acquisition

of individual skills rather than a holistic understanding of knowledge. Moreover, the theory's division into skill-based learning and performance-based learning may establish a dichotomy that overlooks the interconnected nature of skills and performance in practical situations (Ortega, 2009). However, continuous practicing and effective collaboration and interaction between teachers and learners, or among learners themselves, remained the focus of learning and teaching theories during the 1980s. One of which is the interactional theory of language teaching and learning.

2.10.4 The Interactional Theory

This theory views language learning as an interactive process. This was put forward by Richards (2015) who noted that this theory presents a social view of language learning that focuses on the nature of the interaction that occurs between a language learner and others, and how such communication facilitates second language learning. The interactional theory of language learning assumes that learning through interaction undergoes three basic stages: comprehensible input, negotiation on meaning, and repairing understanding (Richards, 2015).

- **Comprehensible input:** At the core of the theory of language learning as an interactive process is the modification of input. Krashen (1989) states that if the input is too difficult or complex, of course, communication will break down. Therefore, when communicating with learners with limited English proficiency, teachers will typically modify their input by using familiar vocabulary, saying things in different ways, adjusting the topic, using stress on keywords, repeating main ideas, using simpler grammatical structures, paraphrasing, and elaborating. In this way, the input is modified, facilitated, and simplified for better understanding as well as learning (Krashen, 1989).
- **Negotiation of meaning:** Richards (2015) noted that this refers to meaning that is arrived at through the collaboration of learners involved. This negotiation may take several forms: First, the meaning may be clarified through several exchanges rather than in a single exchange. Second, one speaker may expand and elaborate to illustrate what the other has said. Third, one speaker may use simple words or expressions the other needs. Finally, one speaker may ask questions to understand more about what the other has said. Gokhale (1995) cited in Goodmacher & Kajiura (2010) commented that interactions of this kind are believed to facilitate language learning. Negotiation of meaning often occurs spontaneously, and repeated

opportunities to communicate in this way are said to provide opportunities for learners to expand their language knowledge and usage (Gokhale, 1995 cited in Goodmacher & Kajiura, 2010).

- **Repairing misunderstanding:** Richards (2015) noted that when interacting with others, despite limitations in their language proficiency, learners need to manage to deal with communication difficulties. This can be achieved through the use of strategies such as the following: Indicating misunderstanding, repeating something the other person has said, confirming understanding, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, and repeating misunderstood words or phrases. Clarifying input is a natural feature of interaction between native speakers as well as among language learners (Richards, 2015).

According to the interactional theory, learners' modification of input, negotiation of meaning, and repairing understanding are core elements to facilitate language comprehension, and hence, learning. As far as reading is concerned, Goodmacher and Kajiura (2010) mentioned that this interactional theory can be applied to developing reading skills. According to them, indeed, reading is often done in serenity, but it would be much more motivating for students to do it collaboratively. While reading, learners could interact with others to confirm information, discuss some ideas, or share opinions. To ensure and enhance collaborative interaction among learners and teachers in reading classes, a three-phase practice in reading classes is highly recommended by many researchers (Alyousef, 2005; Cheng, 1985; Williams, 1994). These reading phases are: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages (see section 2.12). In the interactional theory, the pre-reading stage has a positive role in activating the students' relevant schemata; the while-reading stage helps develop the learners' linguistic and schematic knowledge; while the after-reading stage helps the students integrate what they learned into a new schema structure (Williams, 1994). These reading stages are thoroughly discussed later in the section.

The limitation of this theory lies in the fact that interactions between a teacher and a student may not be as effective for learning a second language this is because of the imbalance of the teacher-student relationship; For example, this imbalance can be observed when students choose not to seek clarification to avoid appearing confrontational towards the teacher's knowledge (Pica, 1987). Other researchers noted that interactions often lead to receiving negative evidence, in the sense that when

interacting, learners might learn mistakes from each other (Ellis, 1997; Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Richards, 2002).

The interactionist theory is in line with the constructivist theory in the sense that the teacher models appropriate strategies, and guides students to construct meaning and use of those strategies in meaningful contexts. The teacher's role is minimized to be like collaborative coaching 'in the learning zone' (Richards, 2015; Wilhelm, 2001).

2.10.5 The Constructivism

Another language teaching and learning theory that shifts the view of language learning from a merely cognitive process to a constructivist one is the constructivist theory. Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist and philosopher, is widely recognized as the pioneer of cognitive constructivism (Hoidn & Reusser, 2021). In this paradigm, students are cognitively active participants, and both the teacher and students actively engage in the learning process. This contrasts with the traditional approach where the teacher simply transmits information to passive students (Widdowson, 1997; Crandall, 2000). The constructivist theory of language teaching is considered a natural and productive process for developing language skills (Harriet, 2013). Rather than just transferring knowledge, the focus is on students constructing their understanding and meaning by actively engaging with the content. This constructivist view sees learning as a dynamic cognitive process where knowledge and thinking evolve through investigation, problem-solving, and interaction, drawing on students' prior knowledge and experiences (Richardson, 1997).

This theory suggests that learners acquire and enhance their intellectual capabilities by actively engaging with their surroundings and attempting to comprehend various objects and phenomena. Piaget's theory involves the construction of increasingly sophisticated cognitive frameworks through iterative cycles of "assimilation" and "accommodation" (Piaget, 1972, 1985, cited in Hoidn & Reusser, 2021). Assimilation refers to the process of incorporating new information into existing cognitive structures, while accommodation involves modifying those structures to fit new experiences. Through these processes, individuals actively construct their knowledge by comprehending and interpreting the world around them, rather than passively receiving information from a teacher (Piaget, 1972).

The theory of constructivist learning, according to Yekple et al. (2021), posits that individuals actively construct meaning, comprehension, and knowledge of the world through their personal experiences. This approach offers the advantage of fostering more engaging learning experiences rather than mere information transmission. Additionally, this theory elucidates how students create meaning by connecting prior knowledge with new information. In contrast to traditional views where knowledge was primarily held by the teacher, contemporary perspectives emphasize active engagement between learners, teachers, and peers. This dynamic interaction facilitates a rich exchange of information, enabling students to uncover, explore, and apply skills and strategies in their learning journey (Yekple et al., 2021).

This shift towards more constructivist, process-oriented instructions is particularly beneficial for teaching EFL reading (Crandall, 2000; Widdowson, 1997). According to this theory, reading instruction begins with a global concept and uses the text to illustrate specific details, starting from the readers' existing knowledge and experiences about the topic. This aligns with the constructivist principle of active student involvement in constructing meaning, which can enhance the effectiveness of EFL reading instruction. Learning is viewed as preceding the development of the process from a constructivist perspective (Richardson, 1997). The interaction between the student and teacher is deemed crucial in constructing meaning and enhancing the students' reading skills. Therefore, the teacher's guidance becomes indispensable in assisting learners to comprehend the text and derive meaning from words. Additionally, meaning can be derived from connecting students' experiences (Richardson, 1997). This method of teaching, which involves activating students' experiences, is linked to a top-down reading process where concepts and schemas from personal experiences aid the reader in grasping the significance of new information (Abosnan, 2016).

Lambert and McCombs (1998), as cited in Reigeluth et al. (2017), argued that the learner-centered approach is rooted in Constructivist Theory, which posits that knowledge is formed internally by the learner. This theory underpins the principle of a learner-centered approach (Brandl, 2002). According to Chun and Plass (2000), Constructivist approaches to learning enable learners to engage directly with the information, contribute their own insights, and establish their own connections. In this context, learning is viewed as a process where the learner is cognitively involved in seeking answers, making generalizations, and verifying hypotheses they have generated

(Chun & Plass, 2000). By taking a major role in planning and negotiating course content, students transform into active participants in their language learning, rather than being passive recipients of knowledge. Furthermore, constructivists emphasize that learning is not only dependent on individual cognitive processes but also on social interactions, discourse, and engagement within a community (Hoidn & Reusser, 2021).

Critics argue that constructivism promotes unguided or minimally guided instructions, leading to students feeling lost, as they may not receive adequate support during the learning process (Kirschner et al., 2006). Additionally, constructivism's perspective on learners interpreting the world uniquely renders standardized curricula ineffective. They claim that constructivist teaching methods may not adequately cater to the varied thinking styles of individual learners, resulting in suboptimal learning results (Carlson et al., 1992).

Another influential theory in the field of language teaching and learning is the Vygotskian theory which is in line with the constructivist theory in the sense that the teacher models appropriate strategies, and guides students to construct meaning and use of those strategies in meaningful contexts. The Vygotskian theory which added to the literature by taking into consideration learners' psychological dimensions.

2.10.5.1 The Vygotskian Theory

This theory is regarded as an expansion of the constructivist theory and is referred to as 'social constructivism'. Social constructivism emphasizes the importance of "knowing how to teach over knowing disciplinary knowledge" (Gallagher, 2007, p. 79, cited in Abosnan, 2016). It adopts an interactional view of language teaching and learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Lev Vygotsky, the Russian psychologist and founder of this theory, viewed language learning as a social process, where meaning and understanding are constructed through dialogue between a learner and a more knowledgeable person (Richards, 2015). According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is a socio-cultural process that occurs within a specific social environment, such as a classroom. Here, individuals (both educators and learners), materials (like texts, books, and visuals), and culturally significant activities and events (instructional methods and sequences) all play a role. Development in learning, according to this theory, is a product of experiences in the environment and the subsequent reflection on these experiences (Richards, 2015). This learning development is shaped by the social context

and interactions among teachers and learners. Vygotsky believed that students can internalize knowledge more effectively when guided by insightful, analytical questions presented by their teachers (Richards, 2015). Wilhelm (2001) outlined Vygotsky's three major concepts to describe the learning process:

- **Scaffolding:** The term refers to the process of interaction that mediates the learning procedures between teachers and learners (Swain et al., 2010). For example, in reading classes, the teacher assists the learners in completing reading activities by providing guided stages for them. Then collaborative dialogue 'scaffolds' the learning process by providing support to learners, and gradually support (scaffolds) are removed as learning develops. Throughout the reading, the teacher provides opportunities for noticing how language is used, experimenting with language use, practicing new modes of discourse, and restructuring existing language knowledge. As Richards (2015) stated that throughout the learner-teacher interaction, the learner receives guidance in scaffolding until reaching a point where independent functioning becomes possible. To engage in mediated learning, the learner needs to cultivate interactional competence, which involves the skill to navigate exchanges despite having limited language proficiency (Richards, 2015).
- **Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Zone of Actual Development (ZAD):** As defined by Wilhelm (2001, p.17) "The place where instruction and learning *can* take place is zone of proximal development (ZPD)... What a child can do alone and unassisted is a task that lies in what Vygotsky calls the zone of actual development (ZAD)." Vygotsky's idea is that students are instructed (scaffolded) to do complex cognitive tasks at the level of (ZPD) where learners can do things with help that they cannot do alone. Learning occurs in this cognitive region (ZPD), which is just beyond what the learner already mastered and can do alone (ZAD). The task that the learner can learn with the guidance and support of a teacher, or peers, is said to lie within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The task that learners have been taught and can accomplish it alone without being assisted by the teacher is located in the zone of actual development (ZAD). The learner's new strategy can only be developed in the ZPD through participation in actual concrete activities. When this is achieved, the strategy then enters the zone of actual development (ZAD), since the learner is now able to complete the task alone without help and to apply this knowledge of strategy to new situations s/he may encounter (Wilhelm, 2001).

To put it all together, Vygotsky (1978) had proposed two levels of performance to apply his theory: the lower level, which is independent performance, and the higher level, which is assisted performance requiring teacher support (Moll, 1990). The distinction between these two levels is referred to as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Coelho (2012), teaching a foreign language using the ZPD involves more than just imparting knowledge; it also entails providing support to help students reach higher levels of performance. Scaffolding serves as a metaphor for the support teachers offer to bridge the gap between students' existing knowledge and the requirements of a task (Moll, 1990). In a study by Safadi and Rababah (2012), it was found that incorporating scaffolding instructions during English reading sessions led to significant improvements in Arab EFL students' reading comprehension skills compared to those who did not receive scaffolding. The researchers suggest that integrating scaffolding techniques in reading instruction can enhance students' comprehension abilities (Safadi & Rababah, 2012).

In addition, Clark and Graves (2005) highlight the importance of scaffolding in teaching reading to EFL learners. They recommend that teachers design pre-, during, and post-reading tasks to address students' weaknesses and strengths. In the pre-reading stage, students can discuss the cultural background of the text. During reading, they can read independently, discuss in pairs, and then as a class. Post-reading activities can further extend the discussion (Clark & Graves, 2005). However, Barnard (2002) argues that scaffolding can be time-consuming, particularly in large classes with limited communication possibilities. In Libya, traditional teaching methods and large class sizes present significant challenges to implementing scaffolding effectively (Aldabbus, 2008; Orafi, 2008). To overcome these challenges, teachers should provide opportunities for students to practice language skills individually, in pairs, and in groups (Abosnan, 2016).

According to Wilhelm (2001), Vygotsky's theory is in line with the learning-centered teaching process in the sense that the teacher models appropriate strategies, guides students in their use of those strategies, and provides meaningful context for using these strategies. The teacher's role is minimized to be like collaborative coaching 'in the zone' (Wilhelm, 2001). Vygotsky's social-constructivist theory combines the teacher-centered approach with the student-centered approach (Staples, 2007) in social learning

activities, motivating students to learn through group work and discussion activities to solve language problems and obtain new meanings after they adopt the strategy.

Vygotsky's notion of teaching instructions (illustrated in *Figure 3* below) is centered around the idea that teachers propose complex tasks in meaningful contexts and students accomplish as much as they can of these tasks. Through different repetitions of the tasks, students take on more and more of the responsibility, with the teacher's guidance and monitoring. Then, students will independently do the task on their own. And the teacher's role is minimized to be like collaborative coaching 'in the zone' (Wilhelm (2001).

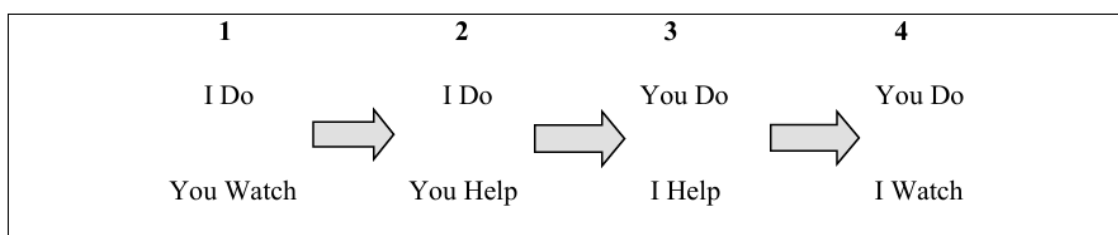


Figure 3: Learning-Centered Teaching (Wilhelm, 2001, p. 11)

The Vygotskian theory emphasizes how students complete learning tasks and how student-to-student contact can support and scaffold the process of acquiring a second language (Ellis, 1999). Through collaborative learning, students create a shared Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Lee et al., 2010). Vygotsky (1978) argues that the nature of social interactions between individuals with varying skill and knowledge levels is crucial for effective learning. The responsibility of the parent, teacher, or peer with greater experience is to find strategies that assist the student in entering and progressing through subsequent layers of information or understanding. According to Vygotsky (1978), students do not simply copy what they are taught; instead, they transform and appropriate the information provided through their own cognitive processes.

Vygotsky's work has not received a great level of attention, partly due to the time-consuming process of translating Vygotsky's work from Russian, and because his sociocultural perspective does not provide a sufficient number of hypotheses to be tested, making improvement difficult, if not impossible (Wilhelm, 2001). According to Rogoff (1990) Perhaps the main criticism of Vygotsky's work concerns the assumption that it is irrelevant to all cultures. He refused the idea that Vygotsky's ideas are culturally universal and stated that the concept of scaffolding - which is heavily

dependent on verbal instruction and interaction- may not be equally useful in all cultures for all types of learning.

The preceding sections have thoroughly discussed various language teaching and learning theories. It is crucial to acknowledge that, due to the complexity of language learning, no single theory has provided a definitive explanation for the process (Hoy et al., 2013; Richards, 2015; River, 1981). Each of these theories offers explanations that vary in usefulness depending on the specific aspect of learning being addressed, and each has distinct strengths and weaknesses. For an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of the learning process, it is essential to consider all theories, as "no single theory of second language acquisition can be expected to provide a complete understanding of it" (Atkinson, 2011, cited in Richards, 2015, p. 31). When approaching the teaching of reading in classrooms, it is advisable to selectively integrate aspects from these various theories based on their alignment with the specific learning context. In this study, the researcher has adopted multiple theories to design a teaching model for presenting and practicing reading in EFL Libyan classrooms. This model integrates principles from schema theory and constructivist theory across three stages of reading practice. The following sections will present the application of these theories in classrooms through different teaching approaches.

2.11 Approaches of Teaching Reading

In the preceding section, a concise overview of the most prominent theories in the field of second language teaching has been provided. Evidently, the question arises as to how these theories can be practically approached in teaching domains in general and reading classes in particular.

Theories of language teaching can offer valuable insights into the dynamics of teaching and learning contexts through teaching approaches (Wright & Beaumont, 2015). The term 'approach' has been used in language teaching to refer to how language learning theories are practically employed as the source of the way things are done in classrooms (Richards, 2015). Teaching approaches employed in classroom instructions are typically grounded in established learning theories and frameworks (Richards, 2015). So basically, an approach is how language theories are reflected in classrooms. It was previously illustrated that each theory has its distinct drawbacks and limitations. Therefore, River (1981) recommended that teachers be eclectic in their choice of

teaching approaches. That is, teachers select from various language theories the approach that suits their teaching domain.

The type of teaching approach being adopted has a substantial influence on student progress and results, as teachers have a crucial impact on academic success (Stronge, 2007). Several studies have shown a connection between teaching approaches and students' educational progress and accomplishments (Brakefield, 2011; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; McGowan, 2007; Yaghmour & Obaidat, 2022). Within the realm of classroom instructions, the application of different language teaching and learning theories is either teacher-centered or learner-centered; this is according to Conti (1989) who categorized teaching styles into two separate classifications: The first is centered around control and the teacher, whereas the second classification is characterized by a responsive, collaborative, and learner-centered approach (Conti, 1989). These are discussed in the subsequent sections.

2.11.1 Teacher-Centered Approach

The teacher-centered approach is defined by Huba and Freed (2000) as a teaching style where students are typically passive recipients of information, with the main focus being on acquiring knowledge, and the teacher's role in this context is primarily that of an information provider and evaluator. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010). A teacher-centered approach, also known as passive learning, involves the teacher being at the forefront of the learning process while the student plays a minimal role in language teaching and learning. Essentially, teacher-centeredness occurs when the teacher takes on the primary responsibility in the teaching and learning process. This approach can be described as a teaching method where the teacher has significant control over instruction, leading classroom activities, and where students typically respond affirmatively to teacher inquiries, with whole-class instruction being the preferred method over others (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Teacher-centered education offers several advantages. As highlighted by Altun (2023), this approach is renowned for its efficiency in delivering a substantial amount of information quickly, enabling educators to effectively share knowledge across various subjects. The structured and predictable nature of teacher-centered education benefits students who struggle with self-directed learning by providing clear guidance, leading to organized classrooms and attentive students. This environment fosters mutual respect

between teachers and students (Altun, 2023). In teacher-centered classes, there is a predominance of teacher talk and questions over student talk, along with a significant reliance on textbooks (Weimer, 2002). According to Toh (1994), in a teacher-centered reading class, the teacher typically stands at the front of the classroom, lecturing and leading, while students only speak when called upon. Peer interaction is rarely encouraged, as students' attention is expected to be focused on the teacher, textbooks, or their written work. Furthermore, teachers and other education professionals, who are experts in knowledge and skills, determine the curriculum content and disseminate it through classroom lessons (Toh, 1994).

Although the teacher-centered approach has its advantages and can be beneficial in certain learning contexts, it is essential for teachers to acknowledge its limitations. Lattimer (2015) argues that in a teacher-centered classroom, students are often driven more by compliance with class rules than genuine engagement with the subject matter. Communication is predominantly one-way, with the teacher posing questions while students complete assignments out of obligation rather than personal motivation. The focus is on meeting standards and adhering to textbook content, with assessments centered on task completion. Lattimer emphasizes that passive learners in such environments may struggle to construct knowledge as effectively as those who take a more active role in their learning (Lattimer, 2015). Additionally, Altun (2023) highlights a significant drawback of the teacher-centered approach, noting that it fails to foster the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Within this instructional framework, students often assume a passive role, rather than being encouraged to explore, discover, and construct their understanding of the subject matter. This lack of active participation in the learning process can result in diminished engagement and motivation. As Weimer (2002) observes, independent and autonomous learners are rarely found in a teacher-centered learning environment. Furthermore, Altun (2023) points out that teacher-centered education can be less inclusive, as it does not accommodate the unique needs and interests of individual students. This limitation is particularly problematic for students experiencing academic difficulties or those with special educational needs.

Despite the drawbacks and limitations of the traditional teacher-centered approach, it remains widely employed in EFL contexts. Many EFL teachers continue to prefer a teacher-dominated command and control of the learning process (Nicol & Macfarlane-

Dick, 2006). This is particularly evident in Libya, where the operation of teacher education and training systems often revolves around a teacher-centered approach (Abushina, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020). The methodology for teaching English reading in Libyan EFL classrooms is significantly influenced by the traditional method of teaching *The Holy Quran* by *The Sheikh*, or religious teacher. This method involves *The Sheikh* controlling the way the Quran is read, pronounced, and memorized, reflecting the societal respect for Islamic religious values within Libya's tribal system (Abosnan, 2016). In these Libyan teacher-centered EFL reading classes, all activities are heavily dependent on the teacher, leaving little opportunity for students to practice their skills and develop their reading abilities (Abosnan, 2016; Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021). The subsequent section will provide a detailed discussion on the teaching methods based on this teacher-centered approach.

2.11.1.1 Methods of Teacher-Centered Approach

The term *method* is defined as "the practical realization of an approach" (Richards, 2014, p. 62). In the field of methodology, there is frequently a differentiation between methods and approaches. Methods are considered to be rigid instructional systems with specific techniques and practices, while approaches embody language teaching philosophies and theories that can be understood and implemented in various ways within the classroom (Rogers, 2001).

A method is characterized by making decisions about the types of activities, and roles of teachers and learners, and includes various procedures and techniques as part of its standard repertoire. In this section an overview of three widely recognized teacher-centered teaching methods, namely: the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, and the Audio-lingual Method, is thoroughly presented. The selection of these three methods for discussion was based on two reasons: They utilize the teacher-centered approach in classroom instructions, and they are commonly used in the Libyan educational context (Abushina, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Elabbar, 2011; Latiwish, 2003; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020; Suwaed, 2011).

2.11.1.1.1 The Grammar Translation Method: A Brief Background

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is a conventional educational approach that adheres to a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher serves as the primary source

of knowledge and authority (Takac, 2008). In GTM classrooms, interactions are predominantly between the teacher and students, with minimal student-student or text-student engagement (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). This method emphasizes that teachers instruct students in the target language through reading and translating texts into their native language, with limited focus on speaking and listening exercises for students (Brown, 2000). Proponents of the GTM believe that the primary goal of the GTM is to help students achieve proficiency in the target language by teaching them the underlying grammar rules and translate from their native language. (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

The principal characteristics of the GTM have been outlined by Richards and Rodgers (2014) as follows: The primary goal of learning a foreign language under the GTM is to gain knowledge of its literature and to benefit from the intellectual development that comes with acquiring an additional language. The method places a core emphasis on reading and writing, with minimal attention given to listening and speaking skills. The teacher is responsible for selecting and presenting the reading texts and determining the writing assignments, while speaking opportunities for students are limited, as the teacher acts as the primary spokesperson. Vocabulary selection is based on the teacher's choices, typically drawn from the reading texts presented, and is taught through bilingual word lists. The basic unit of practice consists of isolated sentences, which are translated into the students' first language. High accuracy is strongly emphasized, as students are expected to achieve a high standard in translation. Grammar is taught deductively, with the teacher presenting the grammatical rules and providing subsequent exercises. Finally, the students' native language serves as the medium of instruction, under the control of the teacher (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

This method of teaching aligns with the behaviorist theory of transferring habits between first and foreign language learning. It is based on the assumption that learning grammar may assist EFL students in enhancing their fluency in the target language by providing them with a thorough understanding of its grammatical and syntactical structure (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). For instance, in EFL reading classes using the GTM, the teacher presents and teach the grammatical rules in the text and then given a bilingual vocabulary list to memorize. As the name suggests, this teaching method involves translating the text from the target language into the native language, with the

teacher providing explanations for unfamiliar words and grammatical rules (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In EFL reading classes, the GTM emphasizes the grammatical structure of the passage and the translation of words into the students' native language. As Abosnan (2016) notes, teachers employing the GTM in reading classes typically analyze the text grammatically, explaining the functions of subjects, objects, and verbs, as well as describing the tenses used. They also provide the exact meaning of culturally related words in the students' mother tongue. Subsequently, students are required to read and translate the entire text into their first language. However, this approach may not facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the text's overall meaning, as bilingual dictionaries often offer literal rather than contextual interpretations (Abosnan, 2016). As Allan (2009) points out, reading does not necessarily involve translating every word, as this can overlook the actual meaning of sentences and words in context. Students need to determine the accurate meanings based on the context, considering that word meanings can vary significantly due to cultural, geographical, and dialect-specific differences, or because they are authorial inventions. In the GTM, students are unlikely to focus initially on the overall meaning of the text or utilize top-down cognitive processes to understand it. Instead, the student is viewed as a "recipient of knowledge" (Lin, 2015), with the teacher's role being to translate, read, and explain the text, or have the students perform these tasks. This approach underscores the teacher's central role in delivering knowledge, rather than encouraging students to engage actively with the text's meaning.

The GTM has several limitations. It places a strong emphasis on accuracy, with the teacher expected to immediately correct students' errors to help them understand their mistakes, an approach grounded in behaviorist principles of error correction to improve learner performance (Saville-Troike, 2012). However, this immediate error correction can have negative consequences, such as reducing students' confidence and making them anxious and hesitant to speak in class (Saville-Troike, 2012). While the GTM can increase EFL students' vocabulary knowledge and aid in reading through the translation of words into their mother tongue, it falls short in supporting reading for meaning. Teaching the skill of translating grammar rules from the L1 to L2 does not effectively promote interactive strategies necessary for comprehension (Abosnan, 2016). As a

result, the GTM may not fully support the development of reading skills that require a deeper understanding of the text.

Despite the GTM's drawbacks, its continued use in many parts of the world may be due to many reasons: First, the method obscures teachers' limited proficiency in spoken language. Second, the fact that this method was the one by which they were previously instructed. Third, this method gives teachers high sense of authority and command in the classroom. And fourth, it is effective in large classes where the teacher does not have to interact with each student individually (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Jin and Cortazzi (2011) added that continuous GTM practices for a longer period in many developing regions in the world are attributed to the slower progress of educational systems and language teacher training, as well as cultural attitudes, varying approaches to change, limited learning resources, and financial constraints.

As far as the Libyan context is concerned, multiple researchers (Ahmed, 2018; Elabbar, 2011; Mohamed, 2016; Mohsen, 2014; Orafi, 2008) have emphasized that the GTM remains the predominant approach for teaching English in EFL contexts. Arabsheibani and Manfor (2001) have illustrated that in various foreign language contexts, including Libyan EFL, the GTM is still perceived as the most suitable method due to its alignment with the existing learning culture in Libya, which is characterized by teacher-centered and silent classrooms. Additionally, Abosnan (2016) notes that many Libyan EFL teachers have been taught using aspects of the GTM, such as the traditional methods for learning the Holy Quran, ancient Arabic poems, and national proverbs. The GTM is preferred by Libyans due to their familiarity with reciting *The Quran* audibly and word for word, which aligns with the principles of the GTM (Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015).

Moreover, Latiwish (2003) elucidated that the process of learning English as a foreign language in Libya is perceived as the learning of grammatical rules and vocabulary. English language curricula and course books in Libya are predominantly designed to facilitate this through rote memorization. Moreover, many Libyan educators are shaped by specific beliefs and cultural norms related to learning, particularly in the conventional Libyan classroom setting where teachers exert greater control over student participation and engagement. According to Elabbar (2011), essentially the GTM is implemented in the Libyan EFL context for two primary reasons: First, numerous Libyan EFL instructors were themselves instructed using elements of the GTM in their educational journeys, such as traditional methods of studying *The Quran*, ancient

Arabic Poetry, and national proverbs. Second, the learning styles of students, are influenced by reserved and limited interaction with teachers.

2.11.1.1.2 The Direct Method: A Brief Background

The second teaching method that is characterized as based on a teacher-centered approach in nature is the Direct Method (DM), which is "largely dependent on the teacher's skills" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 13). Many researchers have consistently classified this method alongside other teacher-centered methods, such as the GTM and A-LM (Elabbar, 2011; Omar, 2014; Alshibany, 2018). The DM was originated in France and Germany in the early 19th century as a response to the GTM. It was considered a 'reform movement' aimed at teaching students a foreign language in the same manner as they learned their native language. However, Cook (2003) noted that the DM was not a complete revolution, as many characteristics of the GTM survived. There was still an emphasis on explaining and grading grammar rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation, with teachers required to perform many of the same tasks as before, but without using the first language for explanation or translation (Cook, 2003, p. 34). In the DM, the teacher is a central figure, with a heavy reliance on their skills and expertise (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Teachers primarily present the foreign language orally, supported by visual aids, and prohibit the use of translation and the students' first language. This makes the teacher the main source from which students acquire the foreign language. The teacher takes charge of the learning process, introducing the foreign language to students and providing accurate pronunciation models (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Due to these characteristics, the DM is considered a teacher-centered method for language teaching.

The fundamental principle of this method is "no translation is allowed" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.23), and the language must be used in context. Oral communication is seen as basic; therefore, the reading skill is based upon what students practice orally with their teacher (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Enriching vocabulary, which might help comprehension, is emphasized over grammar. Teachers should use vocabulary in full sentences and teach it through demonstration. In practice, the direct method stood for the following principles as noted by Richards and Rodgers (2014): First, the foreign language classroom used an immersive approach, with all instruction conducted exclusively in the foreign language. Second, the focus was on teaching everyday vocabulary and simple sentences through a carefully structured progression of question-

and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes. Third, grammar was taught inductively, with new concepts introduced orally first by the teacher. Fourth, vocabulary was taught using visual aids like objects and pictures, with more abstract terms connected to related ideas. And fifth, both speaking and listening comprehension were emphasized, with a strong focus on correct pronunciation and grammar.

In reading classes, the DM involves specific procedures outlined by Larsen-Freeman (2000). The teacher reads aloud to the students and guides them to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context. Students are required to repeat after the teacher, with the exclusion of their L1 in the classroom. Visual aids, such as charts, are utilized to assist students who encounter difficulties with the target language. During the reading-aloud activity, the teacher focuses on correcting students' pronunciation and provides feedback afterward. Following this, the teacher engages students in question-and-answer exercises, expecting them to respond in full sentences in the foreign language to practice new vocabulary and grammar structures (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). These teaching procedures support the claim that the DM is a version of the teacher-centered approach, where students practice the foreign language under the close control and supervision of the teacher. The teacher's central role in guiding, correcting, and providing feedback underscores the teacher-centered nature of the DM in reading classes.

The DM has several advantages, as highlighted by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011). According to their observations, the DM allows the teacher to play a more active role in directing class activities compared to the GTM. This approach results in a less passive role for students, who are encouraged to engage more actively in the teaching and learning processes. Students taught using the DM can develop the ability to think in the target language, which is a significant benefit. Furthermore, classroom interaction is initiated in both directions, from teacher to students and vice versa, although it is often led by the teacher (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). This interactive dynamic enhances student engagement and participation in the learning process.

In the Libyan context, Latiwish (2003) noted that some enthusiastic teachers have been trying to implement the Direct Method to motivate their EFL students to use the target language more frequently during classroom activities. However, Sawani (2009) argued

that this method is challenging to implement in Libyan schools and universities due to several factors. One major obstacle is the large class sizes in Libyan educational institutions, which make it difficult for every student to engage effectively in activities that require the use of English. Additionally, students tend to focus on receiving information, memorizing it, and preparing for exams rather than actively using English in classroom activities. Teachers also often prioritize teaching grammatical structures over encouraging student interaction in English. The prevailing beliefs and learning culture in Libya, which prefer traditional teacher-authority methods, further hinder effective interaction in classrooms and limit students' use of the target language. Moreover, teachers attempting to implement the DM may face sensitive issues such as gender dynamics, particularly in mixed-gender university settings. This can pose challenges for male teachers when addressing certain issues with female students. Many Libyan students, especially females, prefer to remain silent and avoid loud or practical activities (Sawani, 2009). These cultural and educational factors collectively make it challenging to adopt a more interactive and inclusive teaching methods in Libyan EFL classrooms.

Finally, the DM has been criticized by Richards and Rodgers (2014) for overemphasizing the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and foreign language learning, thereby neglecting the practical realities of the classroom. The method lacks a rigorous foundation in applied linguistics and applied linguistic theory. Furthermore, it requires teachers who are native speakers or possess native-like fluency in the foreign language, which is a significant constraint. The method is heavily dependent on the teacher's skills and not on the textbook, and not all teachers possess the necessary proficiency in the foreign language to adhere to the principles of the DM (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

2.11.1.1.3 The Audio-Lingual Method: A Brief Background

The Audio-Lingual Method (A-LM) is another teaching method characterized by a teacher-centered approach, widely used in EFL teaching contexts. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 69), "the teacher's role is central and active; it is a teacher-dominated method." In the A-LM, the teacher plays a pivotal role in modeling the foreign language, ensuring correct pronunciation, monitoring students' performance, providing practice opportunities, assessing student performance through dialogues and drills, and controlling the direction and pace of learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

This method is grounded in the idea that fluent language use is a set of habits developed through practice (Yule, 2010). It is influenced by behaviorist psychology, which views language learning as habit formation improved through drills and repetition. The A-LM adheres to the behaviorist approach of stimulus-response-reinforcement, where a stimulus elicits a response, and reinforcement encourages repetition (Skinner, 1957). Teaching procedures in the A-LM involve processes such as memorizing texts and reading aloud, as outlined by Richards and Rodgers (2001). These procedures reflect the method's emphasis on repetitive practice and reinforcement to foster language proficiency.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), the A-LM employs a structured approach to teaching reading. The teacher begins by presenting students with a model dialogue that contains the key structures focused on in the lesson. Students are then asked to repeat each line of the dialogue, both individually and in groups. The teaching procedures for the dialogue typically follow these steps: First, students memorize the text gradually, line by line, with lines potentially broken down into several phrases if necessary. Next, they read aloud in chorus, with one half of the students reading and the other half responding, without consulting their books and relying primarily on the teacher's articulation. The dialogue is adapted to align with the students' interests or situations. Key structures from the dialogue are selected and used as the base pattern for various drills. After memorization and repetition, students may refer to their textbooks and engage in follow-up reading activities based on the introduced dialogue. Finally, follow-up activities may take place in the language laboratory, where further dialogue and drill work are conducted (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In the A-LM, students' involvement in the reading process is limited, as they are not afforded the opportunity to engage in independent reading or critical thinking (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Instead, students are expected to echo what they hear from the teacher during reading activities, an approach that does not align with the primary goal of teaching reading for comprehension. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), learners in this method are viewed as passive recipients who acquire language through repetitive drills. The emphasis of the A-LM lies in enhancing listening and speaking skills by imitating and memorizing language patterns. While reading and writing are not entirely neglected, the primary focus remains on listening and speaking, with a deliberate avoidance of the use of the native language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This

method underscores the teacher's central role in guiding students through structured and repetitive exercises.

The teacher's role is central in ensuring correct pronunciation and monitoring students' performance to immediately correct errors, as language errors in A-LM are considered a 'bad habit' that needs to be prevented through repetition, reinforcement, and praise of success. The teacher models the foreign language, controls the direction and pace of learning, and corrects students' performance. Teachers emphasize pronunciation, and fluency, and provide students with appropriate opportunities to practice language structures. The A-LM method is teacher-dominated, with the teacher controlling, directing, and assessing student performance through dialogues and drills, where students interact with each other under the teacher's guidance (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

According to proponents of the A-LM, the failure to learn is attributed to improper application by teachers who lack proper training or students who fail to memorize essential patterns and structures, rather than any inherent flaws in the method itself, as stated by Richards and Rodgers (2014, p. 69) that "the method itself is never to blame." To ensure the successful implementation of the A-LM, Brooks (1964) outlines several key responsibilities for teachers. These include: introducing, sustaining, and harmonizing the learning process; using the target language exclusively in the classroom; modeling various types of language behavior; teaching spoken language in dialogue form; directing choral responses by all or part of the class; teaching the use of structure through pattern practice; demonstrating how words relate to meaning in the target language; encouraging students to speak; rewarding student attempts and reinforcing learning; maintaining cultural aspects; and establishing and enforcing the rules governing the language class from the first day (Brooks, 1964). By adhering to these guidelines, teachers can optimize the effectiveness of the A-LM in their classrooms.

The A-LM offers several benefits, as outlined by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011). First, students engage in peer interaction when assuming various roles in dialogues, although this interaction is tightly guided by the teacher to maintain control and prevent disruptions. Second, each student completes their tasks independently, after which the teacher provides feedback on their performance. However, the A-LM has been subject to significant criticism. The method's reliance on pattern practice, drilling, and

memorization has been found to lead to language-like behaviors but not true language competence. Chomsky (1966) rejected the behaviorist theory of language learning underlying the A-LM, arguing that language is not a habit structure and that ordinary linguistic behavior involves innovation and the formation of new sentences and patterns based on complex abstract rules. Similarly, Carroll (1966a) noted that the audiolingual habit theory is no longer aligned with recent developments in language acquisition, and there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of language learning. Additionally, Hadley (2000), as cited in Elabbar (2017), demonstrated that the A-LM failed to fulfill its promise of producing bilingual speakers by the end of instruction. Furthermore, the method overlooked the diverse learning styles and preferences of students, underscoring the need for more inclusive and adaptive teaching approaches.

In EFL teaching in Libya, Sawani (2009) demonstrated that the Audio-lingual Method influenced the attitudes of Libyan teachers towards teaching and learning English, with many teachers of larger student groups favoring drilling in most activities, including reading and grammar patterns. Latiwish (2003) contended that some Libyan teachers may attempt to adapt or incorporate certain elements of the A-LM method, like drilling and memorization, which are part of Libyan learning styles, into more contemporary approaches such as the communicative method.

In conclusion, the teaching methods previously examined GTM, DM, and A-LM predominantly adopted a traditional teacher-centered approach, which was also shown to be commonly used in the Libyan context; however, many researchers have questioned the effectiveness of these teaching methods in the Libyan EFL context, particularly in terms of reading comprehension, with several studies attributing the low level of reading comprehension among Libyan EFL learners to poor teaching instruction, most notably (Abosnan, 2016; Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015; Bagigni, 2016; Algwil, 2024; Elashhab, 2018; Elmadwi & Shepherd, 1914; Elramli, 2023; Omar, 2013; Omar, 2020; Suwaed, 2011; Zeat, 2022; Zraga, 2018) who argue that the traditional teacher-centered teaching fails to engage students actively in the learning process and does not adequately address their individual needs and learning styles, thereby hindering their ability to develop proficient reading skills and comprehension strategies.

Several studies have been conducted in Libya to investigate the teaching methods employed in EFL instruction. One such study by Elashhab (2018) examined the methods used for teaching reading in English within the Libyan educational context. Although

the study is relevant to primary education in Libya, it employed a mixed-methods non-experimental research design, incorporating a questionnaire, systematic observations, and stimulated recall interviews. The quantitative component of the study involved observing 34 teachers who taught fifth graders (approximately eleven years old) and seventh graders (around thirteen years old). The analysis, using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests in SPSS, revealed that "teachers were more accustomed to the older techniques and were not very responsive to the new up-to-date ones" (Elashab, 2019, p. 29). The findings also indicated that Libyan teachers spend significantly less time teaching reading techniques and promoting reading strategies compared to other subjects. Additionally, systematic phonics instruction was nearly nonexistent, with teachers predominantly focusing on teaching reading through alphabetic knowledge and decoding skills. This highlights the prevalence of traditional teaching methods and the need for more contemporary and effective reading instruction strategies in Libyan EFL classrooms.

Further, Mohamed (2016) conducted a study to assess the current methods used to teach reading comprehension at the English Department of Zawia University in Libya and to identify the main factors contributing to students' struggles with reading comprehension. The study also examined the primary obstacles encountered by Libyan students in comprehending written English as part of the English language program. Although the study did not provide practical solutions to these obstacles, it contributed significantly to the literature on the subject. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed to gather extensive data, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with lecturers to gather their perspectives on teaching and learning reading comprehension. The data from 449 completed questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS, while the input from seven lecturers was analyzed through content analysis. The findings indicated that students at the English Department lack reading skills and a reading culture, and face significant challenges in comprehending English. Additionally, many lecturers were found to lack awareness of different reading skills and traditionally taught reading comprehension with an excessive focus on decoding and accuracy. The study highlighted the inadequate learning environment at the department, characterized by limited facilities and library resources, overcrowded classes, and insufficient time allocated to reading classes, all of which have a detrimental impact on the learning and teaching process (Mohamed, 2016). Despite not offering practical solutions for developing and

implementing updated teaching methods, the study enriched the literature on the challenges and shortcomings in teaching reading comprehension in Libyan EFL contexts.

In addition, Al-Beckay and Reddy (2015) conducted a study to illuminate the existing methods of teaching English reading skills to young Libyan EFL learners. Although focused on young learners, the study's findings have broader implications. The research identified several factors that hinder the development of effective reading skills among Arabic-speaking EFL students. These factors include the challenges of learning to read in the different script of English, the restricted availability of English reading materials at home, inadequate parental involvement, insufficient community support for English education, and notably, ineffective teaching methodologies. The study highlighted that the teaching methods used are a critical reason for the limited reading abilities of Libyan EFL students. Specifically, it was noted that "the inappropriate teaching approaches that are often used might limit their ability to decode new words" (Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015, p. 1). This underscores the need for more effective and adaptive teaching strategies to enhance the reading skills of young Libyan EFL learners.

An alternative approach to teacher-centered is student-centered instructions where the focus is on learner-related perspectives is discussed in the following section.

2.11.2 Learner-Centered Approach

Following the traditional teacher-centered approach, Conti (1989) identifies the Learner-centered approach as a pedagogical perspective that prioritizes the learners' experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs. This approach creates a learning environment that is conducive to learning, promoting high levels of motivation, learning, and achievement for all learners (McCombs & Whisler, 1997, p. 9). In recent years, there has been a notable shift from traditional teacher-centered methods to learner-centered approaches (Alonazi, 2017). The concept of learner-centeredness is pivotal in modern language education, as it fosters autonomous learning and encourages learners to view learning as a self-directed and lifelong process (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). This transition to a more student-focused teaching methodology does not imply learning in the absence of teachers; rather, it is facilitated by them. Teachers play a critical role in implementing effective learner-centered instruction, although it is not necessary or feasible to be learner-focused in every aspect

(Bernard & Li, 2016). In this approach, instructors adapt their roles to become facilitators of learning, ensuring that the learning environment is responsive to the learners' needs and conducive to their educational growth.

Student-centered teaching is grounded in the principle that the characteristics and needs of learners should be the central focus of all aspects of language instruction, including teaching, planning, and evaluation (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). This approach posits that learners are not merely passive recipients of knowledge but active participants in the learning process. Engagement is a crucial element, as simply completing activities does not equate to meaningful learning (Blair et al., 2007). In reading classes, for instance, learners should actively construct knowledge by gathering and synthesizing information, and integrating skills such as inquiry, communication, and critical and creative thinking (Huba & Freed, 2000). Providing suitable reading materials alone is insufficient for optimizing academic success. Proficient educators not only select appropriate materials but also ensure active student engagement with the content to enhance learning outcomes (Blair et al., 2007). This holistic approach ensures that learners are fully involved in the learning process, leading to more effective and sustainable educational achievements.

In learner-centered educational settings, students are actively engaged in tasks such as collaborative work, authentic communication, and teamwork, taking responsibility for their own learning by participating in the discovery of knowledge. They select resources to activate their prior knowledge and ensure that learning activities are centered around problem-solving (Çubukçu, 2012). Additionally, students require sufficient time to mentally process information, making connections between new knowledge and its practical applications in real-life contexts. This approach necessitates ample time for interaction, learning, integration, reflection, and the practical application of newly acquired knowledge to various aspects of social, professional, familial, and community life (Çubukçu, 2012). Research by Blair et al. (2007) highlights the importance of maintaining student engagement. Effective teachers are found to keep students on task and engaged 96% of the time, whereas students of less effective teachers are on task and engaged only about 63% of the time. Blair et al. also define *academic learning time* as the period during which a student has the opportunity to learn, is actively engaged with the task at hand, and is succeeding in accomplishing it. This concept underscores the

critical role of active participation and engagement in the classroom for learning outcomes.

Teaching methods grounded in the learner-centered approach are distinguished by the involvement of learners in decision-making processes regarding the types of activities and the roles of both teachers and learners. These methods incorporate a variety of procedures and techniques as part of their standard repertoire. The following section provides an overview of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a widely recognized learner-centered teaching method. CLT is often categorized as a learner-focused teaching style by numerous scholars, including George (1999, as cited in Elabbar, 2011), Lantolf (2000), Richards and Rodgers (2014), and Richardson (1997). This approach emphasizes the active engagement of learners in the learning process, aligning with the core principles of learner-centered approach.

2.9.2.1 Learner-Centered Teaching Methods

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method emphasizes a learner-centered approach to language learning, where the teacher is no longer the central figure in classroom activities (George, 1999, as cited in Elabbar, 2011). In CLT, "the teacher's role is less dominant than in teacher-centered methods" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 25), and their authority is significantly minimized compared to traditional teacher-centered approaches (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This method views learning as "a creative construction process" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 105), placing a strong emphasis on socio-collaborative learning, a fundamental principle of Vygotsky's constructivist theory. Thus, CLT is presented here as a method that aligns with the principles of the constructivist theory of language learning, upon which the learner-centered approach is based. There are several reasons for this alignment: First, the CLT method is grounded in 'constructivist activity theory,' emphasizing that both teachers and learners need to engage with sources of ideas and knowledge within social contexts (Lantolf, 2000). Second, CLT is in line with the constructivist theory, which is fundamentally rooted in observation and scientific research on how individuals learn. This theory posits that individuals construct their comprehension and knowledge of the world by engaging in experiences and reflecting on them (George, 1999, as cited in Elabbar, 2011). Essentially, learners in this method are viewed as constructors of information, actively shaping their subjective interpretations of objective reality. And third, the CLT method aligns with the learner-centered approach based on the

constructivist theory by emphasizing socio-collaborative learning. This collaborative interaction is rooted in Vygotsky's social constructivism, where learning occurs through socializing with more competent others (Richardson, 1997). Richardson suggested that CLT tends to be linked to the constructivist theory of learning, in which "individuals create their new understandings based upon the interaction of what they already know and believe, and the phenomena or ideas they come into contact with" (Richardson, 1997, p. 3). The CLT method advocates for a student-centered approach, as students construct their knowledge based on their background knowledge. As Hadjerrouit (2008) noted, students are assumed to learn better when they are encouraged to explore and discover things by themselves.

The primary objective of the CLT is to enhance the 'communicative competence' of students, a concept initially introduced by Chomsky (1957) in the field of theoretical linguistics. In the context of language teaching, communicative competence refers to the ability to operate effectively in genuine communicative contexts, engaging in spontaneous interactions with one or more individuals through the use of language for meaningful communication, rather than mere mechanical application. This approach emphasizes fluency over precision (Brown, 2007). To effectively build and enhance learners' communicative competence, the CLT method incorporates a range of principles that embody a communicative perspective on language learning. These principles, as outlined by Richards and Rodgers (2014), include: (a) Language learning occurs through its use in communication; (b) Classroom activities should aim for authentic and meaningful communication; (c) Fluency is a crucial aspect of communication; (d) Communication entails the integration of different language skills; and (e) Learning is a creative construction process that involves trial and error. These principles are designed to facilitate various classroom procedures, ensuring that learners develop the skills necessary for effective and meaningful communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

According to Lems, Miller and Soro (2010), in EFL reading classes where CLT is practiced, students engage in discussions about the reading material to share and exchange the main ideas. The focus of reading in CLT is to enhance communicative competence rather than academic language. Students utilize authentic texts for speaking and reading exercises, which can range from menus and newspaper articles to even medicine bottle labels. The primary goal of this is to create natural opportunities for

students to learn a foreign language through interaction with others (Lems et al., 2010). However, students may not have any knowledge about texts derived from literature, rather than a real-life situation such as shopping. Richards and Rodgers (2001) criticized CLT by pointing out that it neglects academic reading, in that CLT is organized around language function (for example, locations, greetings, and frequency) which are needed for interactive communication.

According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), the teacher of CLT acts as a facilitator of communication in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011): First, students engage in group communication and take ownership of their learning. Second, the teacher's authority is minimized compared to traditional teacher-centered approaches. And third, students' native language is allowed to be used in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

It was argued that "CLT is best considered as an approach rather than a method" as it encompasses a wide range of principles that embody a communicative perspective on language learning, which can be applied to facilitate a teaching method (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p.105). Despite the widespread adoption of CLT in EFL contexts, it has been criticized for promoting fossilization by placing excessive emphasis on fluency at the expense of accuracy, particularly in the early stages of language learning. Research has indicated that while learners may develop strong communication skills under this approach, they often exhibit a poor command of grammar and a high level of fossilization (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Furthermore, the applicability of CLT in diverse learning cultures has been questioned (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

The implementation of CLT in Libya has proven to be challenging due to the low overall proficiency levels of teachers, as well as the learning styles and cultural backgrounds of students that do not align with the principles of CLT (Sawani, 2009). Hmaid (2018) observed that English language learners at the Faculty of Arts at Misurata University struggle with communicative skills, primarily because Libyan teachers often rely on basic grammatical structures and frequently use Arabic as their first language. Consequently, instruction tends to focus more on grammar and translation skills rather than on developing effective communication abilities (Hmaid, 2018). Additionally, Ibrahim (2015) examined the attitudes and reading practices of EFL teachers in Libya, highlighting that while there are efforts to adopt new methods such as CLT, many teachers still prefer traditional approaches to reading comprehension instruction. This

reliance on conventional methods presents challenges in effectively applying CLT and motivating students to engage with it (Ibrahim, 2015). Nevertheless, research by Orafi (2009) indicates that there have been increasing attempts to implement CLT in various classrooms throughout Libya, particularly in private schools. The growing globalization and expansion of private enterprises in Libya may facilitate the broader adoption of CLT methodologies (Orafi, 2009).

The implementation of the learner-centered approach and its associated methods in language teaching classrooms necessitates practical considerations and clear guidelines, as emphasized by various researchers, particularly Weimer (2002), whose principles form the foundation for the learner-centered reading model developed in this study (see *Chapter Three*).

2.11.2.2 Practical Consideration of the Learner-Centered Approach

In the practical implementation of the learner-centered approach in language classrooms, several important aspects must be considered. A clear understanding of the responsibilities of both learners and teachers is essential to ensure the successful integration of learner-centered principles in the learning process. Jacobs et al. (2016) and Weimer (2002) have outlined these responsibilities and provided a framework of practical considerations for effectively implementing learner-centered methodologies in language classrooms. This framework serves as a valuable guide for teachers seeking to foster a more engaging and responsive learning environment.

Jacobs et al. (2016) identified ten essential components of the learner-centered approach that must be practiced collectively to foster an effective learning environment. First, teachers and students engage in collaborative learning, with teachers acknowledging their own limitations and participating alongside students in the educational process. Second, encouraging student interaction enhances both learning and self-esteem. Third, it is crucial to help students develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong independent learning. Fourth, students should have a clear understanding of the goals and significance of their studies. Fifth, connecting various topics and subjects allows students to see how they interrelate. Sixth, learning activities should be designed to accommodate the diverse needs of all students. Seventh, educators should challenge students to utilize their critical thinking skills. Eighth, a variety of assessment methods should be employed, moving beyond traditional testing formats. Ninth, creating a

positive learning environment is essential for fostering active student participation. Finally, motivating students to inspire themselves and others contributes to a culture of enjoyment in learning. The integration of these elements is fundamental to the effectiveness of the learner-centered approach in education (Jacobs et al., 2016).

In addition, Weimer (2002), in her book *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice*, introduced five fundamental changes that instructors can implement to prioritize student learning. She argued that to adopt a learner-centered approach, instructional practices must change in five key ways: first, the teacher should assume the role of a facilitator; second, the balance of power should shift towards the students; third, educators should focus on uncovering content rather than merely covering it; fourth, the responsibility for learning should primarily rest with the students; and fifth, evaluations should be used to enhance learning rather than simply assigning grades. These changes will be illustrated in detail.

A. The role of the teacher: The first step in transforming instruction to be learner-centered is for the teacher to assume the role of a facilitator within the classroom (Weimer, 2002). This approach involves promoting student engagement and guiding learners through collaborative activities, discussions, and inquiries. The teacher's role is to assist students as they navigate their learning journey while adapting materials to meet individual needs. Ultimately, it is the students' responsibility to master the material, with the teacher providing necessary support. Teachers can act as facilitators in two key ways. First, they should allow students to take ownership of their learning by actively engaging with the content. Second, teachers should minimize traditional lecturing and instead create opportunities for students to discover knowledge independently, which encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Weimer, 2002). Additionally, instruction should be designed based on the specific needs, strengths, and weaknesses of each student. Creating a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere is crucial; teachers and students should collaborate to foster a learning environment where students feel encouraged to participate and work together. Finally, evaluations should focus on student learning rather than solely on grades. By using assessments to provide feedback and guide students in their learning journey, teachers help learners understand their strengths and areas for improvement, enabling them to make progress toward their educational goals (Weimer, 2002).

B. Redistribution of power in the classroom: The second significant change in instructional practice identified by Weimer (2002) involves redistributing power dynamics in the classroom from the teacher to the student. In a learner-centered classroom, students are viewed as independent learners who have a say in what they learn and how they learn it. However, students often resist this level of responsibility, as it typically requires more effort on their part compared to traditional lecture-based teaching and note-taking. By sharing power between students and teachers, a stronger sense of community and collaboration can be fostered within the classroom. Empowering students can be achieved by involving them in decision-making processes regarding classroom policies, course content, and evaluation methods. For instance, teachers can initiate power-sharing from the start of the course by providing students with a list of assignments from which they can choose a specific number to complete (Weimer, 2002).

C. The role of content: The instructional practice outlined by Weimer (2002) introduces a significant shift in the role of content and the function of teachers. Traditionally, teachers have been focused on ensuring that all the content prescribed in the curriculum is covered. However, Weimer argues that content should not be merely covered, but rather uncovered. This means that instead of rushing through the curriculum, teachers should concentrate on teaching content in a way that enables students to truly learn, internalize, and apply it in their lives, leading to deep learning. To achieve this, she suggests that teachers should prioritize teaching students study skills, such as summarizing and synthesizing so that they can effectively apply the information they learn. Additionally, teachers should refrain from simply providing information to students, but rather engage them in active learning processes that encourage critical thinking and application of knowledge (Weimer, 2002).

D. Responsibility for learning: The fourth crucial modification in instructional practice proposed by Weimer (2002) that leads to learner-centered instruction involves empowering students to take ownership of their learning. Many teachers feel compelled to address any difficulties students face while grasping the content. They may resort to using external incentives such as extra credit or providing extra instruction to clarify the material. However, Weimer argues that these approaches do not effectively motivate students. Instead, she suggests that teachers create an environment that fosters independence and accountability by holding students responsible for their actions and

implementing consequences when they fail to complete assignments. Teachers should consistently maintain high standards for learning while also demonstrating care and concern for their students by building meaningful relationships. As mentioned earlier, students often resist taking responsibility for their learning because it requires additional effort on their part. Therefore, teachers should gradually introduce this expected responsibility in small increments until it becomes ingrained in the classroom culture (Weimer, 2002).

E. Evaluation purposes and processes: The final key change to instructional practices that promote student-centered learning involves the purposes and processes of evaluation. Weimer (2002) emphasizes that there is a significant shift in instructional practice when it comes to evaluation. According to Weimer, grading serves two main purposes. Firstly, it indicates whether students have mastered the content. Secondly, it aims to motivate students to engage with the material. However, these purposes need to be reevaluated as evaluations often fail to measure all types of learning and higher-order thinking skills. Typically, students perceive evaluations solely as a means to earn a grade rather than an opportunity to enhance their learning. To address this issue, teachers can play a crucial role in helping students view evaluations as a tool for improvement. One approach is to encourage students to analyze their own work through self-assessment. Additionally, facilitating peer assessments can also contribute to this shift in perspective. Weimer further argues that teachers should strive to reduce the stress associated with evaluations. This can be achieved by incorporating formative assessments, reviewing material prior to tests, allowing students to refer to their class notes during tests, and conducting debriefing sessions after tests to reinforce learning (Weimer, 2002).

In conclusion, the works of Jacobs et al. (2016) and Weimer (2002) offer valuable insights into the transformative changes necessary for creating a more student-focused learning environment. These changes encompass establishing a supportive climate for learning, shifting the teacher's role to that of a facilitator, empowering students by granting them greater control over their learning process, viewing content as something to be discovered rather than merely covered, and utilizing evaluations to enhance learning rather than solely for the purpose of assigning grades. Reflecting on the contributions of Jacobs et al. and Weimer reveals that the implementation of learner-centered teaching necessitates a fundamental shift in mindset among teachers.

2.11.2.3 The Implementation of Learner-Centered Approach in Language Classrooms

This implementation is based on that "student-centered learning can be implemented in several ways" (Petal, 2017, p.6). The degree of implementation and levels of intensity of learner-centeredness has been a major concern for many scholars in the field of language teaching and learning. Most have argued for varying degrees of learner-centeredness according to students' linguistic levels and the learning environment (Badjadi, 2020; Brandle, 2001; Nunan, 2013). Nonetheless, there is a general agreement that increased learner-centeredness enhances learners' autonomy and helps them take greater responsibility for their learning.

Ur (2001) in Calvo (2007), and Nunan (2013) argued for two versions of learner-centered teaching. The strong version involves motivating learners to find information on their own, create their learning materials, set their syllabuses, and assess their progress (Ur, 2001, in Calvo, 2007). Learners should have a say in decision-making about their learning content, methods, and evaluation right from the beginning (Nunan, 2013). In contrast, the weak version includes recognizing and appreciating learners' requests (even if not always fulfilling them), minimizing teacher-centered discussions, and encouraging more active learner participation (Ur, 2001, in Calvo, 2007). Learners are informed about the processes of their learning and gradually take more responsibility for it (Nunan, 2013). The selection between the two versions is determined by students' linguistic levels and the characteristics of the learning context (Nunan, 2013).

Nunan (2013) further presented a hierarchical model for a learner-centered approach. He suggested that the first step towards learner-centeredness is to provide learners with detailed information about the learning material, objectives, and curriculum content. He stressed that when learners understand the purpose of instruction, their curiosity and motivation are heightened. The next level of learner-centeredness, according to Nunan (2013), involves actively engaging learners in setting goals and selecting content. However, the feasibility and desirability of implementing this level, as well as subsequent levels on the continuum, largely depend on the specific context and circumstances of the teaching situation. The following stage would involve students creating their own goals and content. Lastly, the highest level is characterized by

students drawing connections between what they have learned and the world outside the classroom (Nunan, 2013).

For Nunan (2013) learner-centeredness is a concept that is not set in stone, but rather context-dependent. Despite popular misconceptions, a learner-centered classroom does not involve the immediate surrender of power, responsibility, and control to the students. According to him, learners need a significant amount of time to develop the capacity to make well-informed decisions about their learning preferences and methods. This process typically occurs later in the course, and in some cases, it may only happen towards the end. Nevertheless, Nunan strongly advocates for the creation of curricula and learning materials that support learners in progressing toward complete autonomy (Nunan, 2013).

In examining the debate surrounding learner-centered education, Nunan (2013) emphasized the importance of teachers making decisions based on individual student needs and rejected the idea that learners can navigate their educational journey easily. Instead, he highlighted the teacher's role in facilitating student learning within a learner-centered system. The teacher's role may become less dominant than before, but not less important (Calvo, 2007). Ultimately, Nunan (2013) asserted that the teacher's role is not devalued but rather elevated in learner-centered teaching and he stressed that it requires a higher level of skill and expertise. Student-centered is eclectic in nature with teachers incorporating a range of components from different theories that are appropriate for their teaching context and the learning needs of their students, as stated by Blumberg (2008) cited in Jebiwot (2016, p. 73) "learner-centered teachers do not employ a single teaching method. This approach emphasizes a variety of different types of methods that shifts the role of the instructors from givers of information to facilitating student learning." Teachers who embrace this way of instruction practice a multitude of activities that are centered around students' needs.

In addition, McComb (2008) asserted that learner-centered teaching comes in various forms within educational settings, with practices varying not only between schools but also on a day-to-day basis, showcasing the dynamic nature of student-centered approaches. Furthermore, Nunan (2013) and Tudor (1996) contended that there are different levels of learner-centeredness and that the specific pedagogical context in which one operates determines the extent to which one can progress along the continuum. Therefore, it is essential to consider the unique needs and characteristics of

each learning environment when implementing strategies for learner-centered teaching. This approach enables teachers to cultivate a more inclusive and effective learning experience for their students.

The selection between learner-centered and teacher-centered approaches in reading instruction has garnered significant research interest, particularly due to the fundamental importance of reading skills in language development and the growing emphasis on innovative teaching and learning trends. A recent study by Busa and Chung (2024) examines the effects of these two instructional methods on students' performance in the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) Reading Comprehension Part Seven scores. This quasi-experimental study assessed the effectiveness of both teaching approaches. The findings revealed that while both groups demonstrated improvements in their overall performance, students in the learner-centered group exhibited statistically significant enhancements across all three passage types (single, double, and triple). In contrast, students in the teacher-centered group showed insignificant improvement in one of the three passage types (Busa & Chung, 2024).

In addition, Lak et al. (2017) aimed to explore the impact of the teacher-centered method versus the learner-centered method on the development of the reading comprehension skill of Iranian EFL learners. A total of 120 Iranian EFL learners from Mehrvarz Language Institute in Tehran, Iran were chosen for the study. The research involved several steps including the administration of the QOPT, pretest, research treatment, and posttest. The raw data was analyzed using an independent samples t-test with SPSS for inferential statistics. The results indicated that learner-centered teaching was more effective than the teacher-centered methods in improving Iranian EFL learners' reading abilities (Lak, et al. 2017).

It can be concluded that there are two distinct approaches to language teaching that have been extensively examined by researchers. The responsibility for selecting the most appropriate approach upon which teaching methods will be based lies with the teachers, and this choice should align with the objectives of the learning process and the needs of the students. Regardless of the teaching method adopted in reading classes, many scholars assert that reading is presented and taught in three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. These stages will be briefly discussed in the following section.

2.12 Stages of Teaching Reading

Reading in classrooms is typically practiced in three stages: pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading phases (Barnett 1989; Brown, 2001; Gibbons, 2002; Hogan, et al., 2011; Wallace, 1992). The practice of reading instruction through these three key stages encourages students to take the initiative to build up their reading skills and abilities, as they are continuously exposed to a variety of reading exercises tailored to their needs (Omar, 2018).

The pre-reading activities aim to motivate students to read the written text and to prepare them to be able to read it (Chastain, 1988). These activities play a significant role in aiding EFL reading comprehension skills (Madaoui, 2013). Traditionally, pre-reading preparation has often been limited to simple instructions like, 'Tomorrow's reading is fascinating! Please read pages 25 to 30 and answer the questions on page 31 in complete sentences.' This preparation rests on the assumptions that students are already familiar with the necessary vocabulary and grammar. Other pre-reading activities may include defining difficult words or explaining complex sentence structures, these methods may not adequately prepare students for comprehension (Ajideh, 2003). According to Chia (2001), many students can understand individual words and sentences (a bottom-up reading process) but struggle with the overall interpretation of the text because they do not utilize top-down reading processing effectively. As a result, the effectiveness of traditional pre-reading activities, such as word definitions and structural explanations, is being questioned (Ajideh, 2003).

For Ringler and Weber (1984), pre-reading activities are 'enabling activities' because they equip readers with essential background information needed to engage with and understand the material. These activities should help readers grasp the purpose of their reading and establish a foundational knowledge base to navigate both the content and structure of the text. They argue that pre-reading activities activate prior knowledge, enhance background understanding, and direct the reader's attention. According to Carter and Long (1991), before reading, activities such as warm-up exercises, introduction to the text, and background knowledge elicitation are essential to prepare students for the upcoming material. Previewing the text with students not only piques their interest but also encourages them to approach the text more purposefully (Carter & Long, 1991). This phase also helps students establish criteria for identifying the central theme of a story or the main argument of an essay.

Auerbach and Paxton (1997) have proposed several pre-reading activities grounded in schema theory, these were: accessing prior knowledge, expressing personal experiences related to the topic through writing, asking questions based on the title, semantic mapping, making predictions by previewing the text, skimming for a general understanding, reading the introduction and conclusion, and writing a summary of the article based on the preview (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997). In addition, Nuttall (2005) recommends several pre-reading activities that can make students' tasks more explicit and effective, including providing a reason for reading, introducing the text, breaking up the text, dealing with new language, and asking signpost questions. These pre-reading tasks aim to activate and build upon readers' existing knowledge, engage them with the content, and guide their approach to the text, ultimately enhancing comprehension.

During the while-reading stage, teachers can employ various strategies to enhance students' comprehension. According to Carter and Long (1991), it can be challenging for teachers to assist each student in utilizing reading strategies due to the varying needs and abilities of individuals. However, during this stage, teachers can identify effective strategies, clarify which techniques are most essential for each student to practice, and provide practical exercises through guided reading worksheets. These exercises may include deducing word meanings using context clues, exploring word formation hints, or practicing cognates; analyzing syntax and sentence structure by identifying the grammatical functions of unfamiliar words, examining reference words, and predicting text content; searching for specific information; and mastering the effective use of a dictionary. Carter and Long (1991) also noted that as students engage in reading, they can enhance their reading strategies, improve their proficiency in the foreign language, and better decipher challenging text passages.

In the after-reading stage, Nuttall (2005) emphasizes the importance of evaluating the text as a whole, encouraging students to connect the content with their own experiences and knowledge, distinguish between fact and opinion, and weigh the evidence presented. Marzbanand and Adibi (2014) recommend that students write about the texts they have read to facilitate this process. According to Carter and Long (1991), post-reading exercises serve to assess students' understanding and guide them toward a deeper analysis of the text when necessary. In real-world reading contexts, the primary objectives extend beyond merely recalling the author's perspective or summarizing content; rather, they involve gaining insights into diverse viewpoints and integrating

new knowledge with existing understanding. Consequently, reading instruction should progress beyond basic comprehension exercises focused solely on details, helping students recognize that different strategies are required for various types of texts. For example, through group discussions about their comprehension, students can identify areas of misunderstanding or misinterpretation. These discussions can naturally evolve into text analysis, transitioning from establishing facts to exploring the deeper implications of the texts (Carter & Long, 1991).

Hogan et al. (2011) highlight several essential activities for reading classes, including activating background knowledge before reading, identifying elements of text structure during reading, and posing inferential questions to enhance inference-making. After reading, students should summarize the main points of the text to improve their comprehension monitoring. Unfortunately, these critical stages are often neglected in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading classes in Libya. Mohamed (2016, p. 12) observes that "reading work was supposed to involve pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities; however, it was taught in a traditional way," which has significantly affected the comprehension abilities of EFL students in Libya.

In conclusion, comprehending a reading text is a gradual process that requires students to be guided in becoming skilled readers who actively engage throughout the various stages of the reading class: before reading, during reading, and after reading (Henderson & Buskist, 2011). Prior to reading, students can activate their background knowledge by connecting the material to their past experiences, which enables them to make informed predictions. During the reading process, proficient readers interact with the text and integrate it into their existing knowledge by employing skills such as self-monitoring and refining their predictions. After reading, effective readers should be able to summarize and evaluate what they have read.

Lastly, the preceding sections presented the second dimension of the literature review for this study, thoroughly examining the role of reading in language teaching and learning. It illustrated reading's fundamental position as a foundational skill that supports other learning abilities, such as writing and speaking, and serves as a catalyst for discussions. Various theories were discussed, as they underpin the perspective on reading adopted in this study, highlighting their views on the learning process, effective classroom practices, and criteria for measuring success while addressing error treatment. The advantages and disadvantages of each theory were also examined, along

with a delineation of the differences between various approaches. Two primary teaching approaches were analyzed: the teacher-centered approach and the learner-centered approach. The teacher-centered approach, reflective of traditional methods such as the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), the Audiolingual Method (ALM), and the Direct Method (DM), was explored in detail. In contrast, the learner-centered approach was defined with an emphasis on its characteristics and practical considerations for classroom implementation. Additionally, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method, which embodies the learner-centered approach, was presented. The section concluded with an overview of the three commonly accepted stages of reading instruction, pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading, upon which most scholars agree. It also highlighted effective activities associated with each stage, emphasizing their significance in promoting reading proficiency.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter highlights the significant concerns surrounding reading strategies in EFL contexts. Numerous studies (Acevedo & Rose, 2007; Bagga & McKee, 2023; Banditvilai, 2020; Chawwang, 2008) have addressed this issue, indicating its importance in language education. In the context of Libya, various researchers have explored reading strategies among Libyan learners, with studies conducted by Abosnan (2016), Abugharsa and Elamin (2024), and others revealing critical insights into this language skill.

Despite the growing body of research on Libyan EFL learners' reading strategies, this chapter demonstrates that further investigation is needed to bridge the gap between students' reading difficulties and the realities of instructional practices in Libyan classrooms. As noted by Zraga (2018, p. 225), "although there is a substantial body of research available on the teaching of reading skills, little attention has been devoted to how and why certain approaches are deployed." This study responds to the ongoing demand for research aimed at improving EFL reading practices in Libya, addressing the lack of knowledge and proficiency among English reading instructors.

Additionally, the chapter provides a comprehensive overview of reading as a skill, discussing its various components and the different strategies that can enhance it. It also examines the role of reading within language theories and how reading instruction has been influenced by various teaching methodologies. Through this discussion, the

chapter underscores the need for continued research to improve reading education for Libyan EFL students.

The following chapter presented a discussion of the methodology employed by the researcher in conducting this current study, along with the underlying assumptions that guided this research.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the overall methodological framework of this research. It aims to provide an obvious description of the related methodological blueprints the researcher had followed to effectively and efficiently accomplish her research objectives. This chapter provides a comprehensive account of the research settings and population to furnish valuable insights into the research environment. It further explores the research's overarching strategy, approach, paradigm, design, methods, and procedure to present a thorough overview of the study.

3.2 Setting of the Study

This study was set in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education, a campus of the University of Benghazi, in the eastern region of Libya. The information presented in this section regarding the Department of English at the Faculty of Education in Benghazi was as officially announced by the administration of the Department for the academic year 2022/2023 in the *Department of English Guide* (note: information about the department of English in the guide booklet was written in Arabic, the researcher herself translated this information into English). According to the *Department of English Guide*:

The department grants a Bachelor's degree in Education with a specialization in English language. It offers a variety of courses divided between specialized and educational subjects, carefully selected to meet the needs of graduates both academically and practically. The English Department is one of the first scientific departments in the Faculty of Education. It became one of the scientific departments of the former institute for training teachers in Libya in the academic year 1997-1998, with its first batch graduating in 2000-2001, according to the Libyan decision number (188) of 2001. It was later designated as a campus of the University of Benghazi and assigned as the College of Teachers Preparation according to the Libyan decision number (200) of 2004, and eventually, it became part of the Faculty of Education, as stated in the letter from the Secretary of the National Committee for Universities for the academic year 2004-2005.

The Department graduates English language teachers for both basic and secondary education to meet the demands of the job market in public and private schools. It awards a Bachelor's degree in English to its graduates. The English Department comprises a distinguished group of faculty members who specialize in linguistics, teaching methods, and English literature, all of whom are highly qualified and experienced in both teaching and publishing research in peer-reviewed academic journals according to their interests that align with their academic specialization and research trajectory. They dedicate their attention, efforts, and expertise to combine theoretical study with practical application. This includes sending students before graduation for two semesters to apply their linguistic and teaching experiences in practice across various schools, under the supervision of educational and academic experts who assess the progress of the educational and scientific process. By doing so the department provides the opportunity for training before graduation and gives students hands-on experience in teaching methods.

The Department is committed to preparing exemplary teachers and adheres to the essential foundations, principles, and guidelines required for teacher preparation programs. Its goal is to help colleges achieve excellence in delivering outstanding scientific, educational, and pedagogical services in English language teaching at the undergraduate level. According to the head dean, the Department of English at the Faculty of Education in Benghazi provides students with the opportunity to pursue a degree that integrates education with English studies. Students will: First, gain insights into education and its various contexts by utilizing a diverse array of intellectual resources, theoretical frameworks, and academic disciplines. Second, have the chance to study the English language alongside educational theory, benefiting from a rigorous interdisciplinary approach. Third, learn to conduct research and inquiries related to English language and education. And forth, prepare themselves for a career in teaching English as a foreign language. The program offered by the Department of English consists of four years of full-time study, culminating in a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree with a specialization in English, and includes 61 mandatory courses. *Table 2* below presents the course content of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi.

Table 2 : The Course Content of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi

First Semester						Instruction Language
	Code	Course Title	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	
1	80111	General Psychology علم النفس العام	2	2		Arabic
2	10120	Arabic Language I اللغة العربية 1	2	2		Arabic
3	10130	Islamic Studies الدراسات الاسلامية	2	2		Arabic
4	20142	Reading Comprehension I	4	2		English
5	20152	Listening and Speaking I	4	2		English
6	20162	Grammar I	4	2		English
7	20172	Phonetics I (Theory)	3	3		English
8	20182	Vocabulary and Spelling	4	2		English
Total of credit units and contact hours			25	17		

Second Semester						Instruction Language
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	
1	30310	Introduction to Computer الحاسوب	3	3		English
2	80221	Psychology Educational علم النفس التربوي	2	2	80111	Arabic
3	10230	Arabic Language II لغة عربية 2	2	2	10120	Arabic
4	20242	Reading Comprehension II	4	2	20142	English
5	20252	Listening and Speaking II	4	2	20152	English
6	20262	Grammar II	4	2	20162	English
7	20272	Sentence Writing	4	2	20182	English
8	20282	Phonetics II (Practice)	3	3	20172	English
Total of credit units and contact hours ³			26	18		

Third Semester						Instruction Language
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	
1	50321	Statistics I الاحصاء 1	2	2		Arabic
2	20332	Reading Comprehension III	4	2	20242	English
3	20342	Listening and Speaking III	4	2	20252	English
4	20352	Grammar III	4	2	20262	English
5	20362	Paragraph and Letter Writing	4	2	20272	English
6	20372	Linguistics I	3	3	20172	English
7	20392	Thinking and Study Skills	2	2	80221	English
8	20582	Introduction to Literature	2	2		English
Total of credit units and contact hours			25	17		

Fourth Semester						Instruction
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	Language
1	50411	Statistics II الاحصاء 2	2	2	50321	Arabic
2	80421	Curriculum Fundamentals	2	2	80221	English
3	20402	Children's Literature	2	2	20582	English
4	20442	Listening and Speaking IV	4	2	20342	English
5	20452	Reading Comprehension IV	4	2	20332	English
6	20462	Grammar IV	4	2	20352	English
7	20472	Linguistics II	3	3	20372	English
8	20482	Expository Essay	4	2	20362	English
Total of credit units and contact hours			25	17		

Fifth Semester						Instruction
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	Language
1	80611	Human Development التنمية البشرية	2	2	80111	Arabic
2	80211	Introduction to Education	2	2		English
3	20502	British and American Literature	2	2	20582	English
4	20512	Spoken English for Educational Purposes	2	2	20442	English
5	20522	Semantics and Pragmatics	2	2	20472	English
6	20532	Language Acquisition	3	3	20472	English
7	20592	Academic Writing	2	2	20482	English
8	80511	Teaching Methodology	3	3	80421	English
Total of credit units and contact hours			18	18		

Sixth Semester						Instruction
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	Language
1	20822	Teaching English to Young Learners	2	2	80511	English
2	80631	Technology التقنيات التربوية Educational	4	3	30310+80221	Arabic
3	80641	Classroom Management	2	2	80511	English
4	20602	Materials Development & Evaluation	2	2	80421	English
5	20612	Principles and Techniques of ELT I	2	2	80511	English
6	20692	Teaching Listening and Speaking	2	2	80511	English
7	20682	Campus Journalism	3	3	20482	English
8	80531	Research Methodology	2	2	80221+50411	English
Total of credit units and contact hours			19	18		

Seventh Semester						Instruction Language
no.	Code	Course	hours	Credits	Prerequisite	
1	80621	Health Psychological الصحة النفسية	2	2	80221	Arabic
2	20852	Teaching Literature	2	2	20502	English
3	20712	Research Paper	2	2	80531	English
4	20772	Psycholinguistics	3	3	20472	English
5	20782	Field Training I (Observation)	4	3	80511	English
6	20711	Principles and Techniques of ELT II	2	2	80511	English
7	20762	Teaching Reading and Writing	2	3	80511	English
Total of credit units and contact hours			17	17		

Eighth Semester						Instruction Language
no.	Code	Course	Hours	Credits	Prerequisite	
1	20802	Computer Assisted Language Learning	3	3	80631	English
2	20702	Sociolinguistics	2	2	20472	English
3	80711	School Administration and Supervision	2	2	80641	English
4	20832	English for Specific Purposes	2	2	80511	English
5	80521	Language Testing and Assessment	3	3	50411	English
6	20542	Educational Translation	2	2		Hybrid
Total number of credit units and contact hours			14	14		

Table 2 indicates that, during their initial semesters, students concentrate on foundational language skills. These include courses such as Reading Comprehension I, Grammar I, Writing (A), Listening and Speaking I, Phonetics I, Vocabulary and Spelling, in addition to general subjects like General Philosophy, Arabic Language I, and Islamic Studies. As the student progress through the academic program, he/she is gradually introduced to more specialized subjects within the field of English language studies. Consequently, his/her reading comprehension skills must be developed to address the challenges encountered in other subjects throughout the four years in the Department of English. This is based on that the enhancement of students' reading abilities is crucial for their academic success (Nuttall, 1982).

3.3 Population and Samples the Study

The population refers to the complete set of units to which the research results are meant to apply; Conversely, a sample is any portion of the population that effectively captures the various types of elements present within the population (Dawson & Trapp, 2004). According to Priya (2012), our purpose of the study and our research questions largely determine our sampling plan. The population of this research was the first-semester EFL Libyan students of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi. The number of first-semester students enrolled in the English department at the Faculty of Education in the academic year 2022/2023, as officially announced by the head dean of the department of English, were sixty students (55 females and five males) aged between eighteen and twenty-one years. All students (sixty students) were the population of this current research. Based on Gay et al. (2009), for smaller populations, typically those with 100 or fewer individuals, it is generally unnecessary to sample as it is more efficient to survey the entire population. Thus, in this particular investigation, the objective was to survey the entire population, which comprised sixty students.

The population of this study encompassed Libyan EFL students who graduated from Libyan public secondary schools (Literary Section) where English is presented as a foreign subject; English is not the medium of instruction for those students in their secondary national Libyan schools (Abosnan, 2016; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020). Materials used for teaching English are as officially adopted by the Libyan Ministry of Education for teaching English to Libyan students presented in a book entitled *21st Century English for Libya Secondary 3 Literary Section* a course and a workbook (see *chapter One*). This English book was taught to students within limited-45-minute English lessons (one lesson per week) focusing on grammar and vocabulary (Elmadwi & Shepherd, 1914). When these EFL students enroll in the English Department willing to become proficient in English and achieve their academic goals, their reading difficulties hinder their ability to meet their objectives as noted by Abushafa (2014, p. ii) " the level of language skills of students entering university is well below an acceptable standard, and both teachers and students advocate an early start for learning English in schools". Also, Al Moghani (2003) stated that a low level of proficiency had been noted in Libyan school leavers. As a result, the researcher of this study purposively selected the first-semester Libyan EFL students offering solutions and

assistance to enhance their reading skills at the early beginning of their English proficiency career to enable them to progress securely in their educational journey and successfully achieve their academic goals through the findings and recommendations of this study.

Upon obtaining authorization from the English department's dean at the Faculty of Education, the researcher convened a face-to-face group meeting to inform the first-semester students of their inclusion in the research project. This notification followed the submission of a checklist by the department's dean, which included the students' names, academic numbers, and pertinent details.

3.4 Methodology of the Study

The methodology of research is a perspective on the nature of research and how it ought to be conducted (Potter, 1996). According to Kothari (2004), it is a systematic and scientific approach to addressing research problems. It involves examining the steps typically taken by researchers to solve their problems, as well as the rationale behind these steps. When discussing methodology, the focus is not only on the methods used but also on exploring the reasoning behind this selection in the context of the study. This helps clarify why certain methods or techniques are chosen over others, enabling both the researcher and others to evaluate research results effectively (Kothari, 2004).

To ensure a clear and cohesive presentation of the methodological framework and plans employed by the researcher in conducting this study, it is crucial to recognize and illustrate the interconnected relationships among the concepts that are presented throughout this research sequence. The general methodological framework of research as guided by Creswell and Creswell (2018) involved considering two key aspects: the selection of the research strategy and the selection of the research approach. The decision on the research approach involved further consideration of three factors: The research paradigm, design, and methods. Each of these research methods (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed) has its distinct instruments, procedures, and measures of outcomes, which are essential for the successful execution of the research. The following figure (3.1) summarizes the general methodological framework guided by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

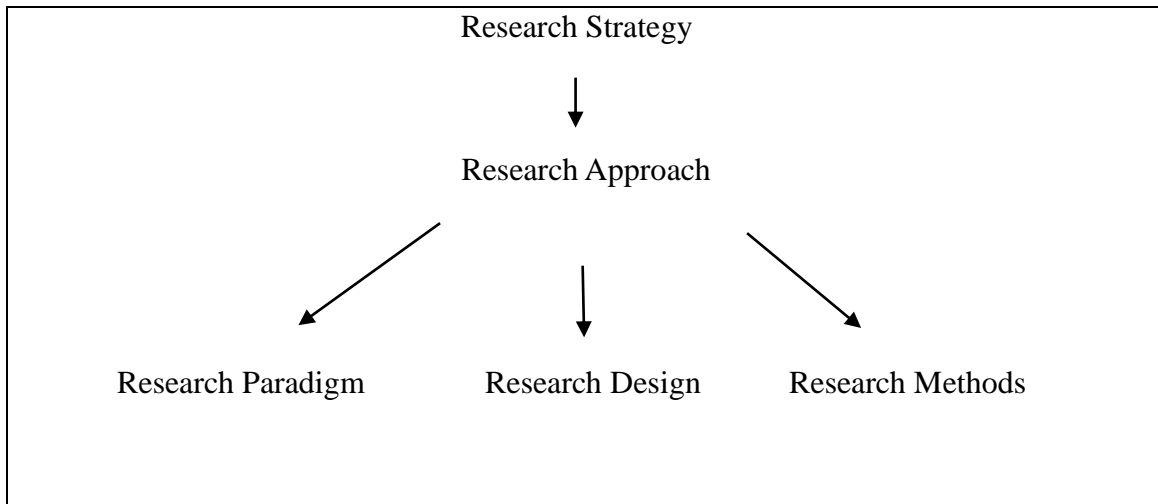


Figure 4: A General Methodological Framework Advocated by Creswell, (2009), Creswell and Creswell (2018).

According to *Figure 4* above, the methodological framework of this study had been designed. *Figure 5* below presents the methodological blueprint of this study to ensure a clear systematic perception of the processes and procedures of this research. The figure provides a structured approach to guide the researcher through the various stages of the investigation. This framework in congruence with the aims and objectives of this research.

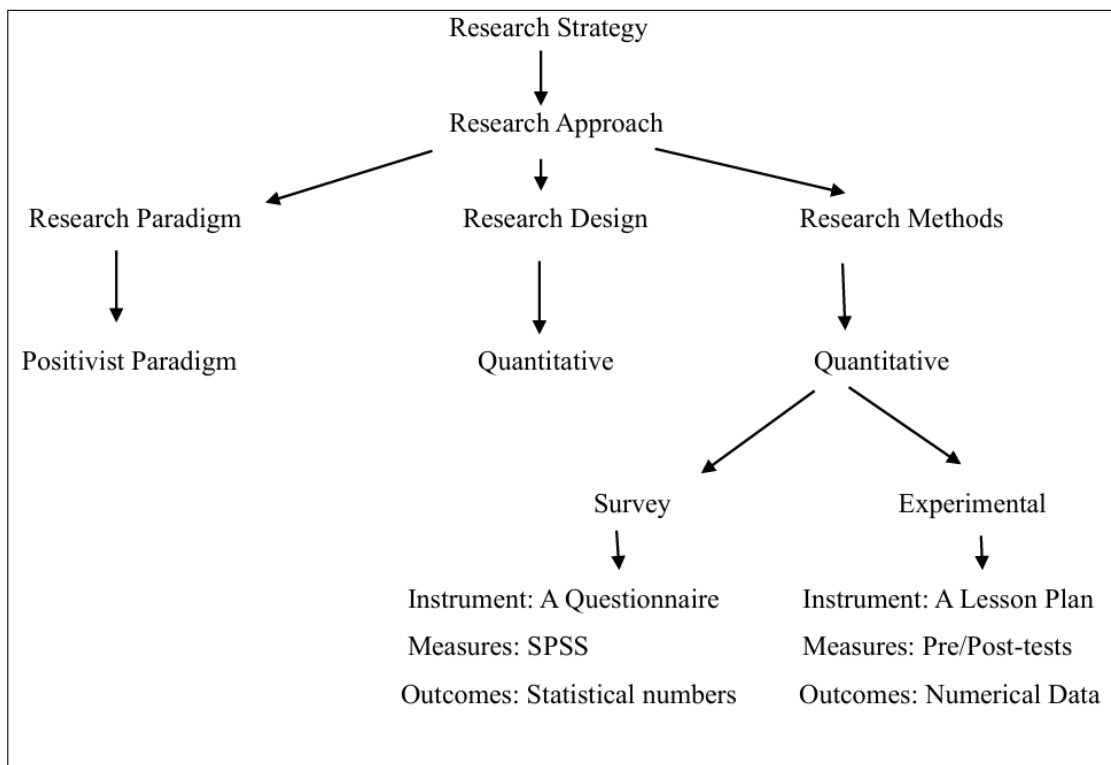


Figure 5: The Methodological Framework of the Study Designed According to Creswell's (2009), and Creswell and Creswell's (2018).

As it is illustrated in the figure above, the researcher of this study followed a quantitative plan in conducting her research, namely: Postpositivist-Paradigm of quantitative research presented in a questionnaire and an experiment. Instruments employed were measured by SPSS statistics. The numerical data adopted were descriptively interpreted.

All of these elements of research were combined to answer this research questions which were related to: First, determining what the most difficult reading strategy among EFL Libyan learners were. Second, identifying the extent to which participants apply different reading strategies. And third, evaluating the effectiveness of learner-centered and teacher-entered teaching instructions in assisting participants overcome their reading difficulties. The research plan adopted in this current study aligned with Creswell (2009) who noted that if the research problem involves: First, identifying factors that influence an outcome. Second, evaluating the usefulness of an intervention. And third, determining the best predictors of outcomes, then a quantitative research approach is the most appropriate method to use. Also, this research plan was in congruence with Goertzen (2017, p.12) who noted that "quantitative research focuses on data that can be measured, it is very effective at answering the 'what' or 'how' of a given situation", as this research aimed to answer the *what* research questions mentioned previously in *Chapter One*.

3.4.1 Research Strategy

The strategy of this research involved an examination of a contemporary issue within its real-world context, using research methods. It utilizes various data collection methods to enable the researcher to investigate a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals (Creswell, 2014). A research strategy offers flexibility in choosing data collection methods that align with the research objectives. Typically, a variety of techniques such as questionnaires, surveys, in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis were used (Creswell, 2014). For the accomplishment of the objectives of this study, the research strategy chosen was to focus on quantifying data and typically involve structured methods to collect and analyze numerical data. The following section presents a comprehensive overview of the approach adopted in this research.

3.4.2 Research Approach

A research approach is a systematic blueprint adopted in gathering and analyzing evidence, enabling the investigator to effectively address the research question at hand (Ragin, 1994). Creswell (2009), and Creswell and Creswell (2018) describe the research approach as the blueprints for research that encompass choices from general assumptions to specific techniques of data collection and analysis. According to him, the primary decision revolves around determining which approach is most suitable for investigating a particular subject. There are three categories included in a research approach: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method. The selection among these three research designs is frequently influenced by three main factors: the researcher's philosophical assumptions, the research design, and the research methods. These, in turn, specify the employed techniques for data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Accordingly, these three main research factors were presented in this study as follows: First, the research paradigm which presented the philosophical perspectives of this research (positivist paradigm). Second, is the research design (quantitative). And third, the study research methods which included the instruments, procedures, and measures of these research methods. These elements are further discussed in the subsequent sections in congruence with this particular study.

3.4.2.1 Research Paradigm

This is the philosophical framework of any research. Creswell (2009) noted that different terms have been used to describe research philosophical perspectives, such as paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mertens, 1998 in Creswell, 2009), epistemologies, and ontologies (Crotty, 1998 cited in Creswell, 2009). The key point is that these terms all encompass the beliefs and principles that shape the researcher's selection of research methods and data analysis (Creswell, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lather, 1986). According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), essentially a paradigm encompasses the abstract beliefs and principles that shape a researcher's perception of the world and influence how they interpret and engage with it. It acts as a conceptual lens through which the researcher evaluates the methodological aspects of their research project, determining the appropriate research methods and data analysis techniques to employ. Paradigms hold great significance as they provide principles that influence what should

be studied, how it should be studied, and how findings should be interpreted. Ultimately, a paradigm informs researchers on how meaning will be derived from data collected, taking into account our individual experiences and perspectives. Therefore, it is crucial to explicitly state the paradigm within which your research is situated (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Candy (1989), one of the leaders in the field, suggested that research paradigms can be grouped into three main taxonomies, namely Positivist, Interpretive, or Critical paradigms. Amongst these three types of paradigms, the researcher of this study had chosen the positivism paradigm as a framework for her study. The reasons behind this selection are illustrated in the following section:

The Positivist Paradigm: Or the positivist tradition comes from 19th-century writers such as Comte, Mill, Durkheim, Newton, and Locke (Smith, 1983), and it has been most recently articulated by writers such as Phillips and Burbules (2000). It is sometimes called the scientific method, empirical science, or positivist research as it represents the thinking after positivism which claims that researchers can be 'positive' about others claims of knowledge when studying the behavior and actions of humans (Creswell, 2009). In positivism, the observer is expected to remain independent, with human interests deemed irrelevant, emphasizing that the main drivers of science are objective explanations that demonstrate causality. Research within this framework progresses through deductions, requiring concepts to be operationalized for measurement (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), the positivists hold a deterministic perspective in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes. Thus, positivists reflect the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes, such as those found in experiments. It is also reductionistic in that the intent is to reduce the ideas into a small discrete set of ideas to test, such as the variables that comprise hypotheses and research questions. The knowledge that develops through a positivist lens is based on meticulous observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists 'out there' in the world (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

According to Creswell (2009) developing numeric measures of observations and studying the behavior of individuals becomes paramount for a postpositivist. Moreover, there exist governing laws or theories that govern the world, and these need to be tested

and refined so that we can understand the world. Hence, within the scientific method, the preferred research approach by positivists, an individual initiates with a theory, gathers data to either support or challenge the theory and subsequently refines it before conducting further tests (Creswell, 2009).

Creswell (2009) added that positivist research is rooted in the scientific method of investigation. This approach posits that experimentation, observation, and reason based on experience should form the foundation for understanding human behavior and the sole legitimate means of expanding knowledge and human understanding. In its pure form, the scientific method involves a process of experimentation to explore observations and answer questions. It seeks to uncover cause-and-effect relationships in nature and is the preferred worldview for research that interprets observations in terms of facts or measurable entities. According to Park et al. (2020) and Guba (1990), the Positivism paradigm relies on quantitative methods, and it can be used in experimental studies examining the effects of an intervention through qualitative analysis.

The positivism paradigm aims to provide explanations and make predictions based on measurable outcomes (Creswell, 2009). These measurable outcomes are grounded in four key assumptions. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) explain these four key assumptions of the Positivist paradigm in research as follows: 1) Determinism: Events happen because of other factors. To understand how factors relate, researchers need to predict and control how one factor affects another. 2) Empiricism: To study a problem, researchers need to collect verifiable data that support our theory and help test our hypotheses. 3) Parsimony: Researchers try to explain things in the simplest way possible. And 4) Generalizability: Results from one study should apply to other similar situations. These assumptions guide research within the Positivist paradigm, ensuring a systematic and logical approach to understanding phenomena (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). The positivist paradigm is objective, its methodology is experimental, and its method is quantitative research methods (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Thus, the positivist paradigm was deemed most suitable for this study, as it employed quantitative and experimental research methods to address and understand the research questions. According to Creswell (2009) and Creswell and Creswell (2018), the positivist paradigm is particularly appropriate for quantitative research. The researcher of this study has maintained objectivity, acting as an independent observer and allowing measurable numerical data, obtained from questionnaires and experiments, to speak for

itself. This paradigm was selected to identify and assess the influencing outcomes observed in experimental research. Specifically, it was utilized to determine the reading difficulties and to measure student performance based on the outcomes of the experiments conducted in this study. To achieve these objectives, the researcher adhered to specific research design relevant to the positivist paradigm, which will be discussed in the following section.

3.4.2.2 Research Design

According to *Figure 5*, after identifying the philosophical framework (paradigm) of this research, the next step is to present the research design. A research design is a particular type of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods that provide clear guidance on the procedures to be followed in a research study (Creswell, 2009). When conducting research, the researcher selects between qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods research design. This design forms a framework for conducting research and assists researchers in making decisions about the most suitable methods to employ in their investigations (Creswell, 2009). Following Creswell (2009) who stated that the quantitative design is most relevant to a positivist framework, and Park et al. (2020) and Guba (1990) who noted that the positivism paradigm relies on quantitative methods and can also be used in experimental studies, this study adopted quantitative research design in conducting the research methods (a questionnaire and an experiment) as it aimed to understand the *What* research questions mentioned earlier in *Chapter One*.

Quantitative research has been rooted in the postpositivist perspective in the late 19th and throughout the 20th century. These encompass true experiments, as well as less stringent forms like quasi-experiments and correlational studies (Campbell & Stanley, 1963), along with specific single-subject experiments (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 1987; Neuman & McCormick, 1995). Recently, quantitative approaches have evolved to include intricate experiments involving multiple variables and treatments, such as factorial designs and repeated measure designs. According to Creswell (2009), if the research problem involves identifying factors that influence an outcome or/and evaluating the usefulness of an intervention, then, a quantitative research approach is the most appropriate method to use. Quantitative research is concerned with gathering and examining structured data that can be represented numerically (Goertzen, 2017). The focus of quantitative research is on collecting numerical data, summarizing these data, and making inferences. The quantitative data are presented in numerical format

and, thus, use statistical and mathematical methods for analysis. It is an objective approach where the researcher chooses a neutral position in conducting his/her research (Creswell, 2014).

Creswell (2009) also noted that in positivist quantitative research design, the researcher examines a theory by defining specific hypotheses and gathering data to either confirm or disprove them. An experimental approach is employed, with attitudes being evaluated before and after the experimental intervention. Data are gathered using a tool that measures attitudes, and statistical methods and hypothesis testing are utilized to analyze the information (Creswell, 2009).

According to the literature above, the research design of this study is quantitative in nature and that is centered around quantitative methods of research. The rationale behind this choice was to obtain numerical data and statistics to understand what reading comprehension difficulties participants exhibit, to what extent do they apply effective strategies to overcome these difficulties, and what effectiveness do different teaching approaches have on improving participants' reading abilities. This research was grounded on quantitative approach allowing the data to inform the findings without bias.

3.4.2.3 Research Methods

After identifying the research design, the third key component in the research approach is to recognize the specific research methods employed in conducting research (see *Figure 5*). The choice of methods depends on whether the intent is to specify the type of information to be collected in advance of the study. According to Creswell (2009), and Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative research methods are positioned with the positivist paradigm adopted; they are the most concrete, detailed, and precise component of a research framework. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) noted that they are essential components in any research, as they are tools to gather and organize information that is crucial for answering research questions and hence, drawing conclusions. For Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative methods are best addressed by understanding and explaining what factors or variables influence an outcome. Dörnyei and Dewaele (2022) argue that the most significant distinguishing characteristics of quantitative research is that it is centered on numbers.

Following Creswell (2009) who stated that the quantitative design is most relevant to a positivist framework, and Park et al. (2020) and Guba (1990) who noted that the positivism paradigm can be used in experimental studies, this study adopted quantitative research methods in conducting the research methods and procedures. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), The primary purpose of using the quantitative research methods is either to establish relationships between variables, typically seen in questionnaires or to compare samples or groups based on an outcome, which is common in experiments.

Accordingly, this current quantitative study employed a questionnaire and an experiment as methods of research. Babbie (1990) noted that a questionnaire provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. It encompasses structured or open-ended questionnaires, or structured interviews for data collection to generalize the findings from a sample to a population. Experimental research, on the other hand, aims to determine if a specific treatment influences an outcome. This influence is assessed by providing a specific treatment to one group and withholding it from another, and then comparing the scores of both groups on an outcome measure (Keppel, 1991).

Thus, this study employed quantitative research methods presented in a questionnaire and an experiment to provide an objective understanding of students' reading difficulties and to accurately measure the effectiveness of practical application of new teaching approaches respectively. By using these data collection tools, the findings were cross-verified to enhance reliability. The researcher employed a grounded quantitative approach, allowing the data to inform the findings without bias. Overall, the study utilized quantitative methods to convert variables into numerical data and statistics, incorporating both a questionnaire and an experiment.

The following sections provide a comprehensive overview of the questionnaire and experimental research tools employed in this study. This includes detailed descriptions of the definitions, characteristics, instruments used, procedures, and circumstances of administration.

3.4.2.3.1 Quantitative Research Methods: A Questionnaire

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a survey design offers a quantitative portrayal of a population's trends, attitudes, and opinions by examining a sample of that

population. This approach enables researchers to address three primary types of questions. Firstly, it helps answer descriptive questions (such as this research question related to identifying the most challenging reading skills). Secondly, it investigates relationships between variables (like investigating reasons behind students' difficulties and their relationship with another variable in learning). Lastly, it examines predictive relationships between variables over time (such as whether learners' reading difficulties are linked to methods of instructing reading in classrooms) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

According to Creswell (2009), a survey design entails presenting a numerical or quantitative depiction of patterns, attitudes, or opinions within a population through the examination of a sample from that population. Based on the findings from the sample, the researcher generalizes or asserts conclusions about the entire population. There are different types of surveys: self-administered questionnaires; interviews; structured record reviews to collect financial, medical, or school information; and structured observations (Creswell, 2009). For the purpose of this study, a close-ended questionnaire was chosen as a quantitative instrument. The aim of conducting a questionnaire was to understand to what extent participants use reading strategies to overcome their reading difficulties.

- MARSJ Questionnaire

Questionnaires are commonly employed in academic research as a means to gather statistically valuable information on a specific subject by posing a series of inquiries to individuals (Stays, 2012). When properly conducted and administrated, questionnaires provide valuable information about a specific group or entire population. A researcher may use a structured questionnaire, open-ended, closed-ended, Likert-type scale, or a demographic questionnaire. The choice of which is related to the research questions and purpose (Krosnick & Presser, 2010). Kumar (2014) notes that the use of closed-ended questions in a questionnaire facilitates the collection of the desired data by the researcher and simplifies the analysis process. Furthermore, closed-ended questions are more efficient and rapid to complete, which can improve the comparability of responses and clarify the meaning of questions for respondents (Bryman, 2012). The researcher of this study has employed the well-known MARSJ questionnaire as a data collection tool (see *Appendix B*).

- Background to the Questionnaire

The questionnaire employed in the study was primarily adapted from Abdul-Samad et al. (2017), Dallagi (2021), Ghwela et al. (2017), Karbalaeei (2010); Li & Wang (2010), Maasum and Maarof (2012), Pammua et al. (2014), Samarajeewa (2023), and Shang (2010). The questionnaire was employed in these studies to assess students' utilization of various metacognitive reading strategies.

The Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) questionnaire is a tool designed to assess students' use of reading strategies when working with academic or school-based texts (Karbalaeei, 2010). It was developed in 2002 by Mokhtari and Reichard, and has been used with students from grade 6 and above. The reliability of the MARSI questionnaire has been well-established through internal consistency estimates. The reported reliability coefficients range from 0.79 to 0.93, indicating the instrument's effectiveness in accurately measuring metacognitive reading strategies. The MARSI measure has been extensively utilized in numerous research studies and is freely available for public use in the English language (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002).

The MARSI scale, developed by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002), was evaluated based on several aspects of validity. Content validity was ensured by designing the scale to assess metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, which correlated with ACT scores, college GPA, and the MSLQ. Structural validity was established through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which revealed high factor inter-correlations, indicating unidimensionality. Generalizability was tested by examining factorial invariance across gender and ethnic groups, allowing for the comparison of metacognitive processing skills. External validity was demonstrated through correlations with other measures, such as ACT scores and college GPA, as well as predictive validity in identifying high-risk patients. However, consequential validity, which examines the implications of score interpretations and actual consequences of test use, was not explicitly addressed. These aspects of validity were not necessarily evaluated using the unified construct-based model of validity but rather through various methods and studies that assessed different aspects of the MARSI scale's validity (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002).

Further, the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSİ) questionnaire has been translated into multiple languages to accommodate students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The translated versions are available in Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Slovenian, and Spanish. This global achievement has enabled the instruments to be widely used by classroom teachers and researchers worldwide, regardless of students' language proficiency levels. The MARSİ has been employed in various studies, with findings published in master's and doctoral dissertations, as well as in peer-reviewed academic journals (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002).

The original MARSİ (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002) was developed over nearly three years by several individuals, requiring significant time and effort. Recognizing the impracticality of creating a comprehensive, reliable, and valid measure of strategy use, the developers intentionally designed the MARSİ to be limited in scope, target audience, context, and interpretation. Therefore, MARSİ was later modified to include 15 items as stated by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002, p. 219) who stated that "we first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis of the MARSİ instrument, which resulted in the reduction of the number of strategy statements from 30 to 15."

It is important to note that the MARSİ questionnaire is a comprehensive tool designed to evaluate students' awareness and utilization of reading strategies while engaging with academic materials. The inventory categorizes reading strategies into three primary domains: Global Reading Strategies (Glob), Problem-solving strategies (Prob), and Support Reading Strategies (Sup). Global Reading Strategies encompass general approaches that establish the foundation for reading, such as setting a purpose, previewing content, and predicting the text's topic. Problem-Solving Strategies, on the other hand, are focused techniques employed to address specific reading difficulties, including checking understanding, re-reading, and utilizing reference materials. Support Reading Strategies involve leveraging tools and resources to enhance comprehension, such as dictionaries or other reference systems. By assessing students' metacognitive awareness of these strategies, the MARSİ provides valuable insights into their reading processes (Karbalaie, 2010).

For the purpose of the research, the modified version of MARSİ was employed because of its relevance to the five main reading strategies (identified by Philip, 2003) investigated in this study namely: guessing the meaning of words from context,

answering detailed questions, making possible inferences, answering implied questions, and determining the meaning of words from words' parts (prefixes and suffixes). The questionnaire consisted of 14 items (see *Appendix B*), each of which presents a reading strategy category as mentioned above. Participants were required to respond on a four-point Likert-type scale from one (This statement is never or almost rarely true of me) to four (This statement is always or almost always true of me). Items of the questionnaire were as follows:

- Item one was related to the strategy of using context clues to search for main ideas.
- Item two presented the strategies of skimming and scanning the text to search for ideas.
- Item three related setting a purpose for reading which is related to the strategy of reading with a purpose in mind.
- Item four was related to the strategy of using background knowledge to understand reading texts strategy.
- Item five presented prediction while reading strategy.
- Item six resembled the strategy of focusing on important information while skimming a whole text strategy.
- Item seven presented the strategy of activating the background to guess a meaning in the text.
- Item eight was related to making a literal translation strategy.
- Item nine revealed the strategy of reading in detail to answer questions.
- Item 10 resembled the strategy of using context clues to understand the meaning of vocabulary
- Item 11 resembled the strategy of guessing form (suffixes and prefixes) and semantic knowledge of (synonyms and antonyms) to understand unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Item 12 was related to the strategy of keeping reading a text despite difficult words.
- Item 13 presented the strategy of reading questions before reading a text,
- Item 14 revealed the strategy of repeating reading to increase understanding despite difficult words.

According to Mokhtari et al. (2002, p.256) "the information derived from the MARSI can provide teachers with a useful means of assessing, monitoring, and documenting the type and number of the reading strategies used by students." The aim of using the

MARSI instrument in this current study was to know to what extent participants use of reading strategies when manipulating a reading text which is the second research question of this study (*see Chapter One*).

- Validity of the Questionnaire

Validity is defined as the extent to which a research tool measures what it purports to measure (Bhattacharya, et al., 2017). According to Mokhtari et al. (2018), the validity of the MARSI questionnaire was assessed using a unified construct-based model of validity. This model encompasses six aspects of validity: First, Content Validity, which includes evidence of relevance, representativeness, and technical quality of the content. Second, Substantive Validity, which refers to the theoretical justifications for the observed consistencies in item responses. Third, Structural Validity, which evaluates the accuracy of the scoring structure in relation to the construct domain. Forth, Generalizability Validity, which examines how well score properties and interpretations apply across different population groups, settings, and tasks. Fifth, External Validity, which includes both convergent and discriminant evidence as well as evidence from measures of other traits. And sixth, Consequential Validity, which pertains to the implications of score interpretations for action as well as the actual consequences of test use, particularly concerning issues of bias, fairness, and distributive justice (Mokhtari, et al., 2018).

Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) validated the 15-item questionnaire with a diverse subject population, including students with similar reading abilities spanning from middle school to college. The internal consistency reliability coefficients for the three subscales ranged from 0.89 to 0.93, with an overall reliability of 0.93 for the entire sample. This indicated a reliable measure of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, demonstrating a high level of dependability in the assessment.

Mokhtari et al. (2018) also state that it is important to highlight that the MARSI is a reliable instrument for evaluating students' metacognitive awareness and their perceived application of reading strategies and that many subsequent studies have provided support for its validity, and its appropriateness for college and adult readers (Mokhtari, et al., 2018). Moreover, it is a common concept that a questionnaire is considered reliable when it produces consistence results across multiple-research. That is, the reliability of a questionnaire is more trustworthy when it produces consistence results

when employed in different studies. The reliability of the MARSII questionnaire adopted in this study has been previously proven in several published studies, for example, Abdul-Samad et al. (2017), Dallagi (2021), Ghwela et al. (2017), Karbalaei (2010), Li and Wang (2010), Maasum and Maarof (2012), Pammua et al. (2014), Samarajeewa (2023), and Shang (2010). The questionnaire was also forwarded to three EFL professors at Benghazi University to check its content and relevance of the items.

However, to enhance the validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the questionnaire used in this research. This preliminary study included ten participants selected from a total of sixty participants. The purpose of the pilot study was to assess the clarity of the questions and to identify any potential issues before the main data collection phase. Feedback from the participants indicated areas for improvement, leading to necessary modifications for one item in the questionnaire. This process ensured that the final version was clear and effective in capturing the intended data for the study.

- Samples of the Questionnaire:

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, all the first-semester EFL Libyan students enrolled in the English Department at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi in the academic year 2022/2023 were participants in this study. A total of 60 students, comprising 55 females and 5 males, with ages ranging between 18 and 21 years, were included in the study. The precise count of 60 students was officially provided by the dean of the department, who presented the students' names in checklists for verification and documentation purposes.

- Procedures of the Questionnaire:

The key aspects of the procedure were: The key aspects of the procedure for conducting the MARSII questionnaire were as follows:

1. A face-to-face meeting was held with the participants to provide them with an overview of the study's objectives and procedures. During this meeting, they received an information sheet (see *Appendix A*). The researcher provided participants with a clear overview about the research objectives by concise reading to the information sheet accompanied with the questionnaire. Participants were informed that their voluntary participation was crucial in identifying the underlying causes of their reading difficulties, with the ultimate goal of developing potential solutions to address these challenges.

2. After obtaining their consent by having them write *yes* on the section regarding their willingness to participate provided in the information sheet (see *Appendix A*), the participants were informed about the date and time for completing the questionnaire, which was scheduled for September 15, 2023, at 10:00 AM.
3. The questionnaire was conducted during a class period, with the help of the classroom teacher who were well acquainted with the general objective of the research project.
4. Participants were directed to read each statement in the questionnaire and tick a choice on the Likert scale to indicate their frequency of use of the reading strategy described.
5. Participants were informed that there were no *right* or *wrong* responses and that they could take as much time as they needed to complete the inventory.
6. Finally, participants were praised and responses were collected.

The following section presents the criteria used in the analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire data.

- Data Analysis of the Questionnaire:

Participants' responses to the Likert scale of each item in the questionnaire were calculated and converted into percentages. The percentage for each response on the Likert scale was determined, and the results for each item were presented, interpreted, and discussed by the researchers. Data were analyzed by calculating the percentage of answers from students using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$
Where, P= Percentage, F= Frequency, N= Total number of the respondents.

The data analysis and findings from the questionnaire had informed the researcher that participants' use of effective reading strategies was notably low. In response to this finding, the researcher proposed implementing a teaching strategy aimed at increasing participants' awareness of how to effectively apply these strategies. The researcher suggested that by enhancing learners' responsibility for their own learning and positioning them at the center of the teaching process, students would be more engaged and motivated to improve their application of reading strategies, ultimately enhancing their overall reading abilities. To address this, the researcher designed a model that prioritizes the learner's role in the learning process and provides essential reading

strategies for comprehending texts. This model was subsequently tested in a quantitative experiment.

3.4.2.3.2 Quantitative Method: An Experiment

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), an experimental design involves deliberately altering one or more variables to assess how this change affects the desired outcome. Crucially, it controls for all other variables by keeping them constant, allowing the researcher to isolate the impact of the manipulated variable (treatment) on the outcome. This is particularly useful when comparing a group that receives a treatment to one that does not, enabling the researcher to determine whether the treatment, rather than other factors, influences the outcome (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The aim of experiment in this study was to address the first and third research questions: What are the most difficult reading strategies among first-semester EFL students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education? Additionally, what effectiveness do teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches have in helping Libyan EFL students overcome their reading difficulties? Through the analysis of data obtained from the pre-test in the experiment, the most challenging reading skills for participants were identified, and the comparison of the data from the pre-test and post-test would illustrate the effectiveness of the different teaching methods employed in the experiment.

The study utilized a true experiment design, employing a random assignment technique to allocate participants into different study conditions based on a manipulated variable of interest. When individuals are assigned to groups randomly, it is referred to as a true experiment (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Descriptive analysis of statistical data collected from research instruments (a pre-test and a post-test) would provide answers to the first and third research questions of this study (see *Chapter One*). An experimental method typically follows an experimental plan, which consists of three sequential sections: (a) participants and design, (b) procedure, and (c) measures. These three sections are generally considered adequate in experimental plans (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.4.2.3.2.1 Design and Participants of the Experiment

"The experimental design chosen for this research was a true experiment, as described by Creswell (2009, p. 148): 'When individuals can be randomly assigned to groups, the

procedure is called a true experiment." This True Experimental Design involves three sub-types of design: 1) The Pre-test/Post-test Control-Group Design, also referred to as traditional, classical design. 2) The Post-test Only Control-Group Design. And 3) the Solomon Four-Group Design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The first sub-type of design had been chosen for the experiment of this study. This design includes a random assignment of participants to two groups. Both groups were administered a pre-test and a post-test, but the treatment was provided only to experimental Group.

Figure 6 Below illustrates the experimental design of this study. This figure used the classic notation system provided by Campbell and Stanley (1963):

- X represents the exposure of a group to an experimental variable (treatment), the effects of which are to be measured.
- O represents measurement recorded on an instrument (pre/post-tests).
- Xs and Os placed vertically relative to each other, are simultaneous.
- The left-to-right dimension indicates the temporal order of procedures in the experiment (sometimes indicated with an arrow).
- The symbol R indicates random assignment.
- No horizontal line between the groups displays the random assignment of individuals to treatment groups.

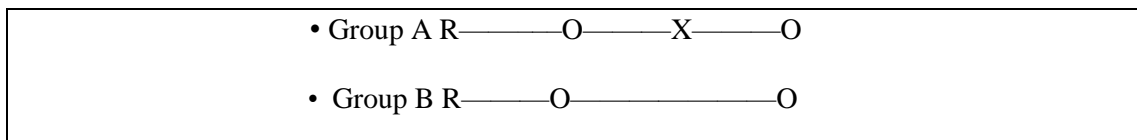


Figure 6: The Experiment Design of the Study Adopted from Creswell and Creswell (2018, p.275)

Participants in the experiment consisted of individuals who responded to the previously administered MARSQI questionnaire, specifically the entire population of first-semester EFL students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi. The experiment was conducted at the beginning of the first semester on September 20, 2023. The rationale for this timing was to assess the effectiveness of the proposed teaching instructions during the treatment phase of the experiment before the participants had any exposure to English instruction at the faculty.

3.4.2.3.2.2 Materials of Experiment

The teaching materials utilized in this experiment were officially approved by the dean of the Department of English at the Faculty of Education for the course *Reading Comprehension I*. These materials, presented in *Select Reading* at the pre-intermediate level and authored by Lee and Gundersen (2011) (see *Appendix I*), served as the instructional resource for both the control and experimental groups, despite the application of different teaching methodologies in each group. The book consists of fourteen chapters, with each chapter focusing on a specific reading skill and including a vocabulary-building section. Each chapter in *Select Reading* features eight distinct sections:

- Opening Page: Engages readers with the theme through relevant artwork and a compelling quotation.
- Before You Read: Connects students personally with the chapter's topic.
- Reading Stage: Presents increasingly lengthy and complex reading passages as the chapters advance.
- After You Read: Contains post-reading activities to help students clarify their understanding, practice the introduced reading skill, and discuss relevant issues.
- Building Vocabulary: Enhances students' vocabulary-building skills within each chapter.
- Reading Skill: Allows students to learn and practice a reading skill through a new short reading text related to the chapter's main passage.
- Discussion and Writing: Provides opportunities for students to discuss and write about a variety of topics.
- Words to Remember: Concludes each chapter with a list of important words, primarily drawn from the Oxford 2000 keywords.

The materials employed in the teaching of reading for both the controlled and experimental groups were identical; however, the teaching methodologies differed significantly between the two groups. The controlled group was instructed by the researcher using a teacher-centered approach, adhering to a lesson plan that emphasized the teacher's role in guiding the learning process. In contrast, the experimental group

was also taught by the researcher but utilized a learner-centered approach, which focused on empowering students to take an active role in their learning.

3.4.2.3.2.3 Procedures of the Experiment

Procedures followed in this study were carefully planned and executed with the guidance of Prof. Intesar El-Werfalli, the supervisor of this dissertation. A meeting was scheduled with the dean of the English Department at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi to present the research objectives, procedures, and major contributions. The Dean provided the researcher with the necessary permissions and a timetable for the teaching courses of both groups, as well as a checklist of students' academic numbers and names. Following this, participants were informed about the procedures to be followed in the experiment, which included key steps that were crucial to the success of the study. The key steps were as follows:

- At the outset of the experiment (September 20, 2023), a pre-test was administered to all participants with the help of the classroom teacher.
- The sixty participants were randomly assigned numbers, for example, participant one, participant two, and so on. It is essential to note that participants' numbers were the same throughout the experiment (participant one in the pre-test was participant one in the post-test, and so on).
- Then, participants were divided into two groups (participants from one-30 in a group, and from 31-60 in another group). This procedure is called a true experiment (Creswell, 2009).
- One group was a control group and the other was an experimental one. They were taught similar material *Select Reading* (see *Appendix I*) through two different teaching instructions, namely: the teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching methods respectively. It is worth noting that four chapters were presented during the experiment time.
- Each group was taught in two lessons (two lectures per week), the duration of each lesson was for two hours.
- Following this, a post-test was conducted. Participants' scores from the pre-test and post-test were compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed in the experiment.

3.4.2.3.2.4 The pre-test Variable

The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the experiment. Data collected from the pre-test were used to establish that participants had equal levels of reading abilities and to answer the first research question of this study, which was identifying the most difficult reading strategy for participants.

Given that the participants were secondary school EFL students in their first semester in the English department, the pre-test was derived from the *English for Libya Secondary 3 Literary Section Course Book* to ensure that the test matched the participants' reading level. Both the pre-reading and post-reading tests were designed around the five main reading strategies identified by Philip (2003), which include identifying main ideas, guessing meaning from context, making inferences, answering detailed questions, and determining meaning from word parts (prefixes and suffixes). Consequently, the pre-test included a reading passage followed by five questions, each addressing a specific reading strategy presented in the passage (see *Appendix C*). They were as follows: Question one focused on the strategy of guessing the meanings of difficult words from context. Question two assessed the ability to answer detailed questions. Question three was related to making inferences and answering implied questions. Question four examined the strategy of determining the meaning of words from their parts, such as prefixes and suffixes. Finally, Question five addressed the strategy of identifying main ideas. The test was piloted by two instructors from the English Department at the University of Benghazi, and participants were informed of the pre-test procedures. They were given one hour to complete the pre-test.

Notably, data collected informed the researcher about the reading strategies that participants found most difficult. This information, combined with insights from the questionnaire, served as the basis for designing a reading model implemented during the treatment phase.

3.4.2.3.2.5 The Treatment Variable

The treatment variable in this research was a teaching phase designed to investigate and reveal effectiveness of teaching instructions based on teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches in assisting students overcome their reading difficulties. Teaching instructions based on a learner-centered approach were presented as the treatment variable of the experiment. By administering the treatment to one group and

withholding it from another, the researcher can isolate the effect of the treatment and determine whether it is the treatment itself, rather than any extraneous variables, that are responsible for influencing the outcome, thereby ensuring internal validity (Creswell, 2009).

In the treatment phase, the researcher herself taught the controlled group and the experimental one. Two lesson plans were employed as an instrument for the practical application of teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching approaches with the controlled and experimental groups respectively. Additionally, a checklist of classroom management served as another instrument of the experiment to ensure well-organized, disciplined, attentive, focused, and academically productive outcomes of the experiment.

- Instruments of the Experiment:

The instrument employed in the experiment of the study was a lesson plan. Lesson planning, as defined by Harmer (1998), is the art of combining several different elements into a coherent whole so that a lesson has an identity that students can recognize, work within, and react to whatever metaphor teachers may use to visualize and create that identity. The plans that help teacher identify aims and anticipate potential problems are proposals for action rather than scripts to be followed slavishly, whether they are detailed documents or hastily scribbled notes (Harmer, 1998). During lesson planning, teachers prepare activities, strategies, and evaluation tools to enhance teaching effectiveness (Batubara et al., 2020; Derin et al., 2020). In simple terms, a lesson plan serves as a guide that teachers use to ensure lesson objectives are met within a specific time frame, while also outlining the strategies and methods to achieve those goals.

The lesson plan followed in this study was in two versions: The teacher-centered lesson plan for the controlled and the learner-centered lesson plan for the experimental groups. Each lesson plan was centered around three reading stages as noted by Barnett (1989), Brown (2001), Gibbons (2002), and Wallace (1992). These three stages were as follows: First, a pre-reading stage where the topic of the unit is introduced and pre-reading questions are discussed. This stage aims to prepare students for the unit topic and raise their motivation. Second, the while reading stage where the reading passage is presented alongside its new words and grammatical rules. This stage aims to get

students to learn strategies for reading comprehension. And third, after reading stage in which opinions and reflections on the reading passage are discussed through classroom discussions.

3.4.2.3.2.5.1 A Teacher-Centered Lesson Plan

This section describes the procedures that the researcher had followed in teaching reading following a teacher-centered lesson plan. In these traditional teacher-centered lessons the researcher followed characteristics of teacher's role proposed by many scholars in the field. For example: Huba and Freed (2000) noted that the teacher's role in teacher-centered teaching is primarily that of an information controller and evaluator; while students are typically passive recipients of information, with the main focus being on acquiring knowledge. The teacher is at the forefront of the learning process while the student plays a minimal role. For Richards and Schmidt (2010) essentially the teacher takes on the primary responsibility in the teaching and learning process in teacher-centered classes. The teacher has significant control over instruction, and leading classroom activities, and students typically respond affirmatively to teacher inquiries, with whole-class instruction being the preferred method over others (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Also, Weimer (2002) noted that teacher-centered classes are characterized by more teacher talk and questions than student talk, as well as a great reliance on textbooks. In a teacher-centered reading class, the teacher stands in the front of the classroom lecturing and leading. Students only speak when the teacher calls on them. Interaction between peers is rarely encouraged because their attention should be focused on the teacher or the textbooks and written work on their desks (Weimer, 2002). Further, Lattimer (2015) contends that in a teacher-centered classroom, students are driven more by compliance with class rules than genuine engagement with the subject matter. Communication is largely one-way, with the teacher asking questions while students complete assignments out of obligation rather than personal motivation. The focus is on meeting standards and textbook content, with assessment centered on task completion (Lattimer, 2015).

Bearing in mind these characteristics, the controlled group was taught by the researcher using a teacher-centered instructions. It is worth noting that it was easy for the researcher to practice this teacher-dominant instruction since this method is widely used in Libya (Abosnan, 2016; Abushina, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Algwil, 2024; Azzouz & Taleb in Omar, 2020 Elabbar, 2011; Elmahjoub, 2014; Hmaid, 2018; Latiwish, 2003;

Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020, Orafi, 2008; Suwaed, 2011), and it was the method by which the researcher herself was instructed in her educational career in Libyan schools and universities.

It is worth noting that the reading lessons for the controlled group were 12 lectures that lasted for 2 hours. These two hours were divided as follows:

A pre-reading stage (20 minutes): At this stage, the teacher asks students to read and answer the pre-reading questions of each unit. The aim of this is to prepare students for the unit topic. Then, the teacher checks and discusses answers with the class.

A while reading stage (60 minutes): Here, the teacher reads the reading passage and has students follow his/her reading in their books. Then, she/he writes new words on the board and explains their meanings. Some students are asked to read aloud individually. In the vocabulary section, the teacher writes the new words on the board, explains their meaning, and asks students to put these new words in sentences of their own. Then, students are asked to recognize these words in their context (the reading passage) and decide whether they have the same meaning throughout the passage or not. About the grammatical part, the teacher writes the rule on the wall, explains it, and asks students some questions to check their understanding. Then, their attention is directed to these grammatical rules presented in their textbooks. Later, students are asked to individually answer the reading exercises in their textbooks, and the teacher goes over the answers with the class and gives reasons for her choices.

An after reading stage (40 minutes): At this stage, students are asked to quietly and individually scan the reading passage, and answer the questions that follow. Then, the difference between skimming and scanning skills is explained to students, after that they are required to answer the reading activities of skimming and scanning in their books. The teacher then goes over the answers with the class and tries to explain the reasons of the selected choices. In case of incorrect answers, the teacher corrects students' mistakes. Finally, the teacher asks students to do the discussion exercise at the end of each unit. The teacher tells students what is meant by making inferences and how to reflect upon the reading passage and express their opinions.

3.4.2.3.2.5.2 A Learner-Centered Lesson Plan

The lesson plan for the experimental group was based on a learner-centered reading model designed by the researcher herself for the purpose of this study. Her model was

based on an integration of aspects of two theories of language learning: Schema Theory and the Constructivist Theory. The model aims to present a pedagogical framework that implements constructivist learner-centered teaching instructions across three stages of teaching reading as illustrated in the subsequent section.

The researcher designed this reading model specifically for the Libyan EFL context, which is characterized by a teacher-centered approach (Abushina, 2017; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2020, 2025). The rationale for this model is to gradually promote a learner-centered teaching method within a primarily teacher-centered framework (Abushina, 2017; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2020). The model aims to provide EFL teachers with a comprehensive framework for planning reading lessons, thereby enhancing student engagement and encouraging more effective use of reading strategies. To achieve the research objectives, it was essential to evaluate this model using an experimental method to clarify the relationship between students' reading difficulties and the instructional methods used by teachers. The research findings are intended to demonstrate to EFL teachers how implementing this new approach can help Libyan EFL learners overcome their reading challenges.

- The Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model

There is often confusion among writers regarding the distinction between the term *model* and term *theory*. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), *theory* and *model* are sometimes used interchangeably as explanatory devices within a broad conceptual framework. However, Ruddell and Singer (1994) highlight a clear difference between the two: a theory explains a phenomenon, while a model serves as a metaphor to represent that theory. The theory is dynamic, describing how the model functions, while the model is static, providing a snapshot of a dynamic process (Ruddell et al., 1994). Davies (1995) further describes a model as a systematic set of guesses or predictions about a hidden process, which are then tested through experimental studies. In this study, the term *model* refers to the practical application of theory, tested through experimental research methods. Goodman (1998) explains that a model is not a theory of reading comprehension by itself; it must incorporate instructional learning theories to illustrate whether these actions help learners read efficiently. A model serves as a bridge connecting theory to its practical application (Goodman, 1998). Similarly, the model of reading proposed by the researcher in this study integrates aspects of schema theory and

constructivist theory into a learner-centered framework, designed to be tested in EFL teaching contexts.

In the *Integral Three-Phases Learner-Centered Reading Model* presented in the treatment phase of this study, reading is considered to be a cognitive constructivist process because of two main perspectives:

First, drawing on the cognitivist perspective, readers use their existing background knowledge to process and understand new information (Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; McKay, 1987). Schema theory, in this model, was highly applied in pre-reading activities in preparing students to understand written texts, and build schema around the topic or activate an already existing schema (Johnson & Hudson, 1982, cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983). The theory emphasizes the interactive process that occurs between readers' prior knowledge, experiences, and the content of the text they are reading (an interactive view of the bottom-up and top-down processes). In this model, several schema-theory-based pre-reading tasks/strategies had been designed to activate prior knowledge, enhance comprehension, and facilitate a deeper engagement with the text, such as accessing background information, making predictions, and asking questions related to the material.

Second, from a constructivist perspective, on the other hand, readers display an active involvement in constructing meaning in a learner-centered learning environment: Readers, in learner-centered teaching instructions, were viewed as active participants in creating, constructing, and interpreting meaning from their past and present experiences (Jonassen, 1991). The focus was on students constructing their understanding and meaning by actively engaging with the content. This constructivist view sees learning as a dynamic process where knowledge and thinking evolve over time through investigation and problem-solving, drawing on students' prior knowledge and experiences (Richardson, 1997). This active dynamic view of learning is highly characterized in learner-centered constructivist contexts where learners are highly engaged, motivated, and responsible for their learning outcomes (Weimer, 2002). Learner-centered teaching is fundamentally based on a constructivist learning theory framework (Petal, 2017).

The integral learner-centered reading model designed in this study served as a guide for the researcher for the gradual practical implementation of a learner-centered approach in

reading classes. It was based on the assumption that there are degrees and versions of the constructivist learner-centered approach to teaching (Brandl, 2002; Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002). The model presented degrees of learner-centeredness across three phases of teaching reading in EFL classrooms: pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading stages (Barnett, 1989; Brown, 2001; Gibbons, 2002; Wallace, 1992). Throughout these stages, the model describes the teacher's role (ranges from teacher-introducer, teacher-facilitator to student-centered), students' role, and types of reading activities employed.

Following Nunan (2013), Brandl (2002), and Weimer (2002), the degree of centeredness in this integrated learner-centered reading model may vary in areas such as the choice of the learning materials, the scope of the learning environment, the degree of teacher guidance and learners' role. Accordingly, the teachers' role in such lessons can thus range from teacher-introducer, teacher-facilitator to student-centered lessons, with the balance of control of learners over the learning experience being a defining characteristic.

The researcher of this study had provided guidelines and principles for her integrated model summarizing pedagogical and instructional design issues that need to be considered during the planning of learner-centered reading lessons. The researcher distinguished three degrees of learner-centered reading stages in relation to three key areas: the role of the teacher, the role of the learner, and the type and aim of reading activities involved. By outlining this framework, the researcher offered a structured way for teachers to leverage reading materials pedagogically, allowing for a gradual shift from more teacher-centered to more student-centered models of instruction.

- Principles of the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*:

The model proposed in this study was based on the following overlapping principles, it is worth noting that these principles were thoroughly discussed in detail throughout different sections in the literature review of this study (see *Chapter Two*). Principles of the integrated three-stage learner-centered reading model were as follows:

1. The first Principle: It is an integral reading model in which reading is viewed as a cognitive constructivist process where readers use their cognitive schemata knowledge to construct and understand the meanings of written texts. Reading here is viewed as having a constructive and meaning-making nature. Learning reading in this model is

considered to be accomplished within a cognitive constructivist framework. It is also an integral model since it implements learner-centered instructions across three stages of teaching reading in EFL classrooms.

2.The Second Principle: The model adopted the cognitivist perspective of schemata theory which assumes that learners are cognitively active their schemata throughout the three stages of reading (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Nassaji, 2002). Learners, in this model, process reading texts by activating three types of schemata: content knowledge, cultural knowledge, and background knowledge to understand the contextual content of the text (an interactive view of the bottom-up and top-down reading processes discussed in *Chapter Two* section 2.2.1).

3.The Third Principle: This integral model also adopted the constructivist's view of learning (see *Chapter Two*, section 2.10.5) as constructing meaning that can be derived from connecting students' experiences (Jonassen, 1991; Richardson, 1997). According to this theory, learners' construction of meanings is ultimately utilized in learner-centered teaching environment (see *Chapter Two*, section 2.11.2) "the foundation of learner-centered teaching is rooted in a constructivist framework of learning theory" (Petal, 2017, p.4). Thus, the model is based on the constructivist suggestion that learners are active participants in constructing and interpreting meaning from their past and present experiences within learner-centered learning contexts. Reading here is viewed as having a constructive and meaning-making nature.

4. The Fourth Principle: "Student-centered learning can be implemented in several ways" (Petal, 2017, p.6). This principle is fundamental in this model. The degree and levels of intensity of learner-centeredness are practiced according to students' linguistic levels and the learning environment (Brandle, 2001; Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002). Learner-centeredness is a concept that is not set in stone, but rather context-dependent (Nunan, 2013). Further, learner-centered teaching comes in versions and degrees within educational settings, with practices varying not only between schools but also on a day-to-day basis, showcasing the dynamic nature of student-centered approaches (McComb, 2008).

5. The Fifth Principle: Reading in classrooms is typically practiced in three stages: Pre-reading, while reading, and post reading phases (Barnett 1989; Brown, 2001; Gibbons, 2002; Wallace, 1992). The practice of reading instruction through these three

key stages (see *Chapter Two*, section 2.12) encourages students to take the initiative to gradually build up their reading skills and abilities, as they are continuously exposed to a variety of reading exercises tailored to their needs (Omar, 2018).

Based on the aforementioned principles, the researcher of this study has developed this integral model which focused on the implementation of learner-centered teaching instruction across three stages of reading. There are a number of issues that need to be taken into consideration when applying this model in reading classes

- Issues to Consider:

This model posits that learners are active participants in the construction and interpretation of meanings, drawing from their past and present experiences within a learner-centered learning environment. The interaction between students and teachers is considered essential for meaning construction and the enhancement of students' reading skills (Richardson, 1997). Consequently, the teacher's role as a guide is deemed indispensable in aiding learners to comprehend texts and derive meaning from words.

Teachers' role across the three reading stages in this model ranges from an introducer, and facilitator (guide), to monitor. The teacher's role is not devalued but rather elevated in learner-centered teaching and requires a higher level of skill and expertise (Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002). According to Nunan (2013) and Weimer (2002), teachers make decisions based on their students' needs, they reject the idea that learners can navigate their own educational journey easily. Instead, they highlighted the teacher's role in facilitating student learning within a learner-centered system. In learner-centered classes, teachers may select topics, set of goals for their lessons, and choose a series of reading passages to ensure that the contents are appropriate for their pedagogical goals (Brandl, 2002).

Teachers need to be aware of the fact that the degree of learner-centeredness is based on learner's level of language expertise. The degree of teacher versus student-centeredness in decisions about resource selection, the scope of the learning environment, and comprehension tasks is closely tied to the learner's level of language expertise (Brandl, 2002; Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002). When shifting from teacher-centered to student-centered designs, the students' levels of proficiency become an increasingly pivotal factor that also needs to be taken into account. The learners need to have a minimal functional proficiency that enables them to independently determine topics without the

intervention of the teacher. In other words, as students' proficiency increases, they can take on a greater role in shaping the content and processes of their learning, moving towards a more autonomous, student-centered model. The balance of control between teacher and learners is thus closely aligned with the student's language skills and abilities (Brandl, 2002; Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002).

Teachers may also adopt the strong version or the weak versions of learner-centeredness according to the dynamics of their teaching environment, this is according to Ur (2001) in Calvo (2007) and Nunan (2013) who argued for two versions of learner-centered teaching: The strong version involves motivating learners to find information on their own, create their own learning materials, set their own syllabuses, and assess their progress. In contrast, the weak version includes recognizing and appreciating learners' requests (even if not always fulfilling them), minimizing teacher-centered discussions, and encouraging more active learner participation (Nunan, 2013; Ur, 2001, in Calvo, 2007). In addition, there are different levels of learner-centeredness, and that the specific pedagogical context in which one operates determines the extent to which they can progress along the continuum of learner-centeredness levels (Nunan, 2013; Tudor, 1996).

It is important to note that a learner-centered classroom does not involve the immediate surrender of power, responsibility, and control to the students. According to Nunan (2013), learners need a significant amount of time to develop the capacity to make well-informed decisions about their learning (this time is provided in this model in the pre and while-reading stages). Their complete responsibility for learning typically occurs later in courses, and in some cases, it may only happen towards the end (in the post-reading stage) (Nunan, 2013).

Based on the above principles and considerations, the researcher of this study has proposed her *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* as a pedagogical framework aimed at improving and enhancing reading instruction for EFL learners in particular, while also applying to EFL learners more broadly. This model was designed aiming to assist students in overcoming their reading difficulties by providing a structured approach that emphasizes active engagement and the integration of prior knowledge within the reading process. The Figure below illustrates the detailed blueprints of this *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*.

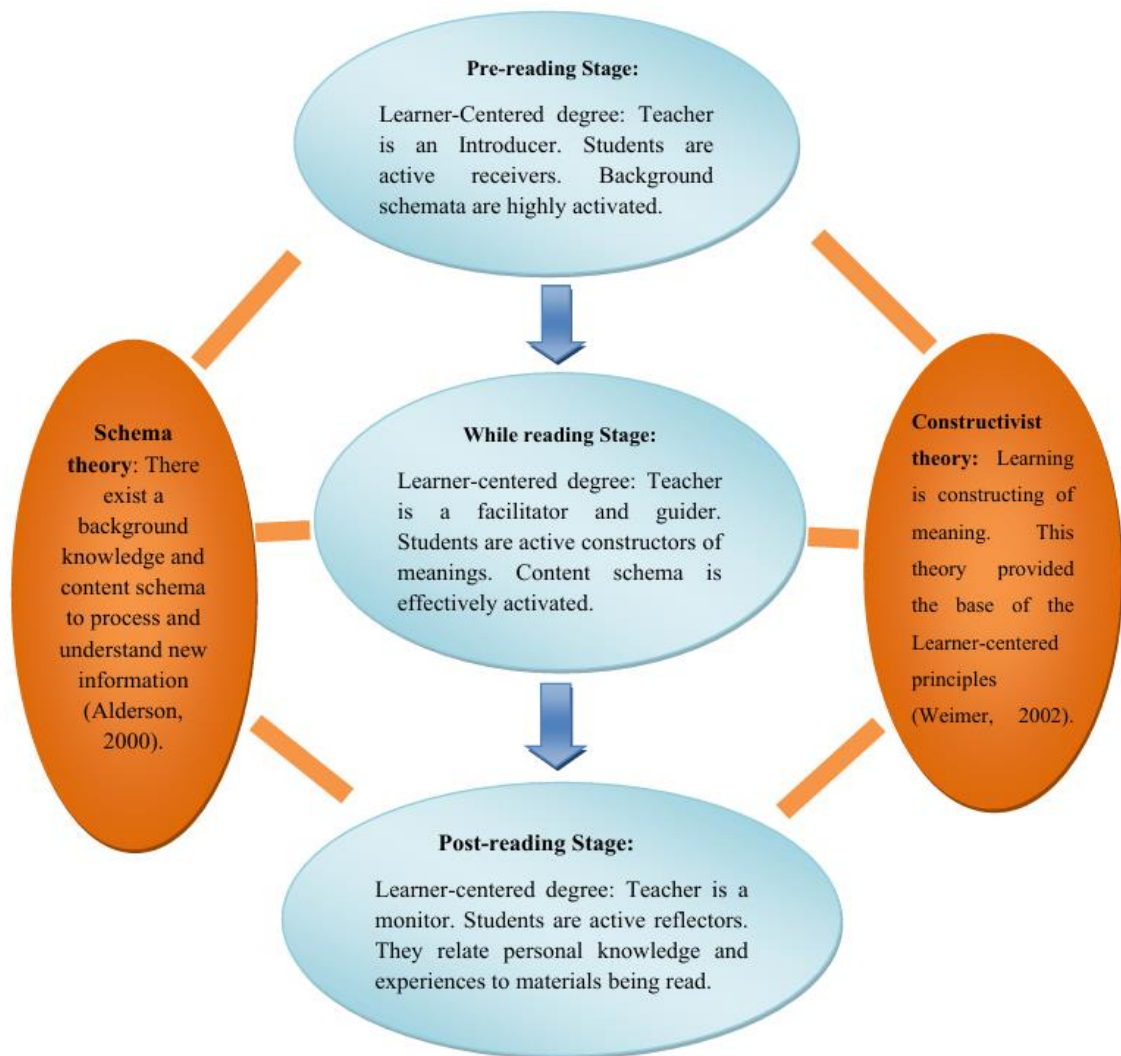


Figure 7: *The Integral Three-Phases Learner-Centered Reading Model*

The above model is based on: the three Stages of teaching reading (Brown, 2001; Gibbons, 2002), the Schema theory (Grabe, 1988), the Constructivist Theory of Learning (Richardson, 1997), and Learner-Centered Principles by Weimer (2002). Basically, this model presented a gradual implementation of gradual degrees of learner-centered instruction across the three stages of teaching reading. Students in this model are cognitively active participants in constructing the meanings of what they read. They are at the focus center of learning. The teachers' role is not excluded, instead, their role degrees from introducer, facilitator and guide, to monitor throughout the three stages of reading in learner-centered classes. Degrees of learner-centeredness vary according to students' linguistic proficiency and the specific learning environment. Teachers need to exercise patience, as learners require substantial time to develop autonomous learning abilities and responsibility for learning.

- Stages of Centeredness in the Model

There are three stages of learner-centeredness presented in this model. The degree of learner-centeredness is reflected in the ranging of the teacher's role from an introducer, a facilitator, to a guider throughout the three reading stages. These are discussed thoroughly alongside the suitable classroom reading activities for each stage of centeredness:

1.A Teacher-Introducer Pre-Reading Stage: This stage aims to activate students' schema knowledge. That is, it is an activation stage where reading topics are introduced so that students can activate their background knowledge (schema) by connecting to past experiences, enabling them to make predictions. The significance of this stage lies in creating a positive attitude towards the text through class work before reading (Abbott & Wingard, 1981; Madaoui, 2013). At this stage, learners are provided with schema-based reading activities such as accessing prior knowledge, expressing personal experiences related to the topic through writing, asking questions based on the title, semantic mapping, making predictions by previewing the text, skimming for a general understanding, reading the introduction and conclusion, and writing a summary of the article based on the preview (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997).

It is a **Teacher-Introduced** (provided) pre-reading stage as the teacher's role is to introduce students to the title and topic of reading. That is, the teacher provides students with suitable reading materials. This stage is based on the researcher's belief that teachers' introduction and selection of reading materials at the early beginning of the pre-reading stage has advantages: EFL readers may not have automated one or more of the fundamental reading processes in the foreign language such as word decoding and recognition which can lead to working memory overload and divert attention away from constructing a coherent understanding of the text. This view of the researcher aligns with Cobb and Stevens (1996) who noted that teachers' determination of materials in second language learning lightens the learning burden that learners may exhibit when encountering reading texts above their learning level in the target language. Brandl (2002) also noted that at beginning levels, teachers' selection of specific reading texts allows them to support EFL readers in developing key skills like vocabulary decoding and recognition. In the teacher-introduced pre-reading phase, the teacher can control the navigational scope through a focused task design and carefully chosen topics. This helps prevent learners from getting lost or overwhelmed. There is a concern that if students

are allowed to choose their reading topics, they may select texts that are too long or challenging to complete.

Additionally, when students choose hypertext materials, they may encounter new information within an unfamiliar environment. This can increase the burden on the learner, as they have to decode not only the structure of the information but also the basic vocabulary and syntax of the text itself (Chun & Plass, 2000). These issues reveal the importance of providing appropriate support when designing teacher-provider (introducer) reading classes for EFL students. The point to be asserted here is that teacher-determined topics at lower proficiency levels help gradually support learners' reading abilities before transitioning to more student-centered models. By maintaining control over the reading materials at the teacher-introduced stage, the teacher provides a more structured and manageable learning experience, mitigating the risk of students becoming lost or overburdened when left to their own devices.

Also, in the teacher-provided pre-reading stage, visual aids presented by teachers have been found effective as advance organizers. These visual aids help build background knowledge relevant to the target text, facilitating the contextualization of what is being read. Pictorial cues can also increase comprehension of a reading passage, particularly for low-proficiency EFL readers (Brandle, 2002; Hudson, 1982, Omaggio, 1979). Cultural images can function to enrich the text, as instructors can use them to capture students' attention, leverage natural curiosity, and encourage prediction by asking how the illustrations relate to the text (Barnett, 1989). Furthermore, the use of visual imagery aids provides concrete representations of unfamiliar vocabulary, supporting the learning of new words (Kellogg & Howe, 1971) and enhancing incidental vocabulary acquisition (Chun & Plass, 1996). Visual aids provided by the teacher at the teacher-provider pre-reading stage can effectively scaffold learners' comprehension and language development.

2. A Teacher-Facilitated While-Reading Stage: The aim of this stage is to allow for students' direct interaction with the written texts and to increase the degree of learner-centeredness by moving students to a more active and reflective processing role, and the teacher moves to the role of a facilitator. To accomplish this role: First, students are allowed to read the text themselves. This means giving students the opportunity to activate their content schema (see chapter two, section 2.9) and take ownership of their learning. Students interact with the text and integrate it to their schema knowledge

through activating skills like self-monitoring and refining predictions (Henderson & Buskist, 2011). Second, the teacher minimizes lecturing on the content and instead creates opportunities for students to discover it for themselves. During this stage, students are asked to identify elements of text structure, and proposes inferential questions to focus on making inferences. Third, students discuss the main ideas of the passage, make inferences, recognize words' behavior in the context, and guess their meanings. This encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The while-reading stage aids in understanding the writer's intention and clarifying the content and structure of the text through interaction between students.

It is a **teacher-facilitated** stage, where the teacher facilitates opportunities for student collaboration and interaction. This dynamic interaction facilitates a rich exchange of information, enabling students to uncover, explore, and apply reading skills and strategies in their learning journey in general (Reigeluth et al., 2017). Students follow the teacher's lead but can independently explore the content. This balance allows the teacher to provide structure and direction, while still giving students opportunities and facilities for autonomous learning and meaning-making. Through carefully designed tasks, the teacher facilitates the student's reading process and guides them to explore a variety of preselected resources. However, as Furstenberg (1997) noted, the tasks should not be so broad that students aimlessly wander through the material, yet open enough to allow for multiple paths, outcomes, and interpretations. These varying interpretations can then form the basis for subsequent classroom discussions and interactions. Despite the restriction that the teacher maintains control over the scope and topics, learners still have some autonomy, as the task types typically include making comparisons and inferences, gathering factual information and descriptions, identifying main ideas and details, and summarizing main points and events.

A key difference between the teacher-introduced pre-reading stage and teacher-facilitated reading stages lies in the degree of control over the reading process and how learners approach the text. While an introductory control of context and topics has merits, students ultimately need to learn their reading skills independently. Evidence suggests that students who excessively rely on instructional help may not learn as much as those who attempt to solve problems themselves. Pederson's (1986) study in Cobb and Stevens, (1996), for example, found differences in cognitive processing between students who had access to help on reading comprehension questions versus those who

did not. The results indicated that when students were required to fully process the text before viewing the questions, they demonstrated higher comprehension rates compared to when the text was available while answering. In other words, "greater benefit was derived from the subjects' being aware that they were required to do all their processing of the text before viewing the question" (Pederson, 1986, p. 38, as cited in Cobb & Stevens, 1996, p. 133). This suggests that a teacher-facilitated stage, which encourages more independent processing, may be more beneficial for developing students' reading skills in the long run (Brandl, 2002).

3. A Learner-Centered Post-Reading stage: It is a learner-centered reading stage where students take full control of exploring the underlying meanings of the texts. By taking on a significant role in negotiating meanings of content, students become active participants in their language learning, rather than passive recipients of knowledge. At this reading stage, students assume the roles of self-directed, autonomous learners, taking complete responsibility for their learning. By placing the learner at the center of the reading lesson, this model fosters the autonomous behaviors and metacognitive skills that are essential for effective, self-directed language acquisition.

It is a **teacher-monitored** post-reading stage where the teacher's involvement is limited to that of a monitor, providing support and guidance as needed. In other words, it is a learner-centered post-reading phase where students actively seek answers, make generalizations, and verify hypotheses. At this stage, students should be able to summarize, reflect, infer, and evaluate the text in hand. However, with low language-level students summarizing the main points of the text to enhance comprehension monitoring would be more effective for this reading stage (Henderson & Buskist, 2011). This reading stage of learner-centeredness reflects students' autonomous learning as Brandl (2002) stated that the learner-centered instructions are at the core of language learning autonomy which is the ability to take responsibility for one's learning (Holec, 1981).

In this post-reading learner-centered stage, students might decide how the outcomes will be evaluated, their assessment of learner outcomes can take various forms, such as short writing assignments, essays, mini-projects, or presentations that demonstrate the students' analytical and interpretative skills with reading texts. Students may also document their process and progress through diaries or portfolios (Brandl, 2002).

To put it all together, this model presented a pedagogical rationale for the implementation of learner-centered teaching in the three stages of teaching reading in EFL classrooms. Pedagogical issues such as the degree of learner-centeredness, learner control of contents and learning processes, level of proficiency, and text types need to guide the reading lessons and task design, and none of these degrees were absolute. That is to say, different variations of lessons may fall at different places along a continuum from being teacher-introduced, teacher-facilitator, to student-centered reading classes. They may vary in areas such as the choice and scope of materials, the learning process and activities, and the degree of teacher guidance.

The researcher of this study assumed that by practicing this graduate grading of student-centered instruction throughout the three reading stages, it is likely that students are encouraged to gradually develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning, prompting them to take the initiative to build up their reading skills and abilities. For students with a low level of language proficiency, Omar (2018) suggests that continuous exposure to a variety of reading exercises across the pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phases can help uncover and activate the dormant skills within them, especially when necessary.

- The Practical Application of the *Integral Three-Phases Learner-Centered Reading Model* in EFL Classrooms

The section presents a lesson plan based on the previously designed and discussed *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*. In this section, the practical implementation of the learner-centered model is illustrated aiming to describe the mechanisms by which it could be practiced in EFL reading classrooms and to exemplify the degree of learner-centered teaching across the three reading stages. The lesson plan outlines the types of activities appropriate for each stage, as well as the teacher's role and level of intervention, as discussed in the previous section. Additionally, the lesson plan delineates the learner's role at each stage and demonstrates how teachers can gradually guide students toward greater responsibility for their own learning.

The figure below summarizes the learner-centered lesson plan the researcher had followed in teaching the experimental group. It illustrates the aim of each reading stage alongside the teachers' role, the learners' role, and the types of reading activities being employed.

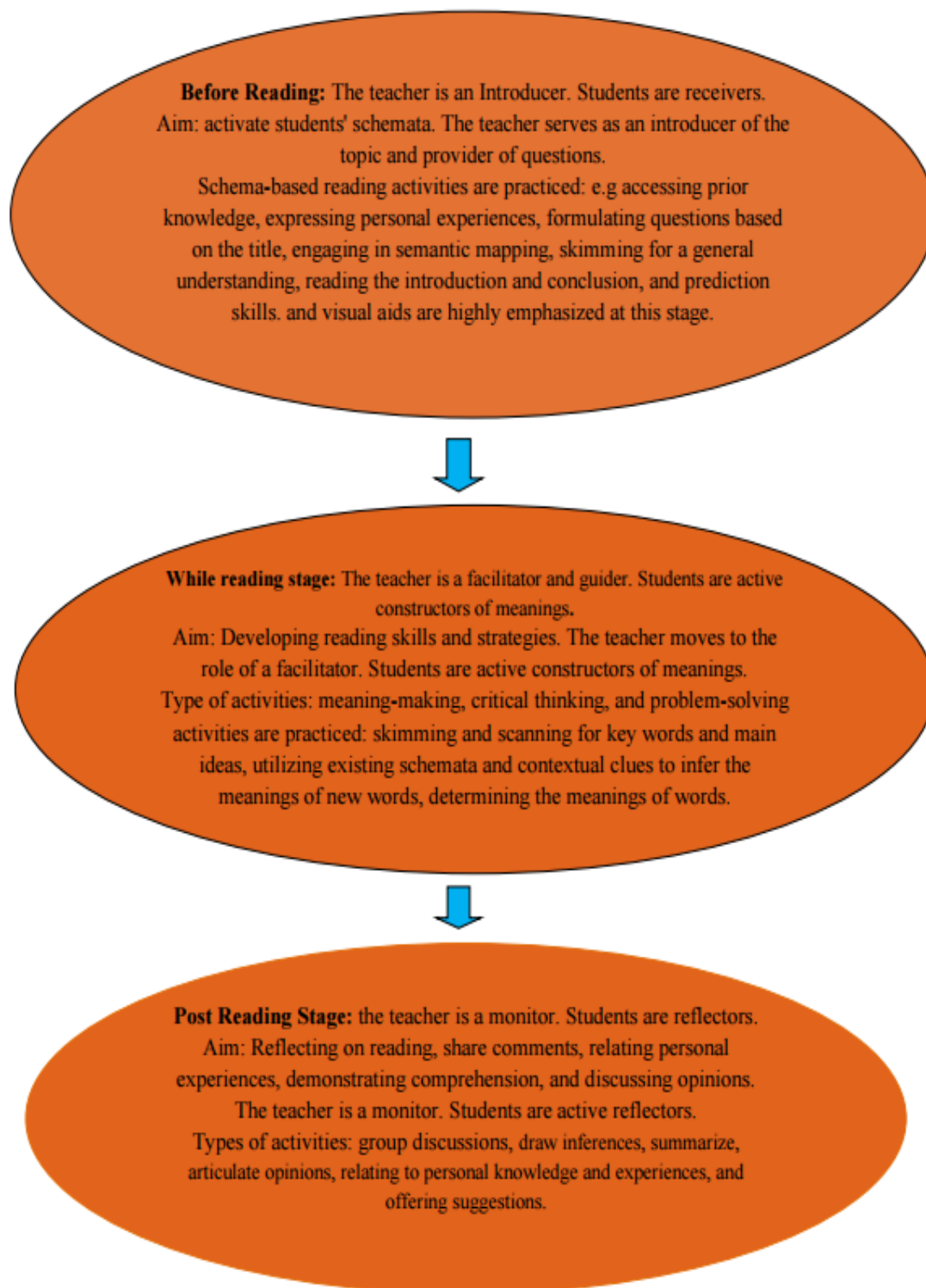


Figure 8: The Practical Application of *the Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* in EFL Classrooms.

Before Reading (30 Minutes): The aim of this stage is to activate students' schemata. The teacher serves as an introducer to the topic, providing introductory questions that stimulate students' thinking and encourage them to make predictions based on the title. Schema-based reading activities are practiced during this phase, including accessing prior knowledge, expressing personal experiences related to the topic, formulating questions based on the title, engaging in semantic mapping, skimming for a general understanding, and reading the introduction and conclusion. Students are also tasked with summarizing the article based on their preview. This stage emphasizes prediction skills, encouraging students to make informed predictions about the content of the reading passage. Additionally, visual aids related to the reading topic play a crucial role in facilitating discussion and elaboration among students regarding what they observe. Students are asked to read the title of the passage, discover its meaning, and predict what they will read based on the given title. In pairs, students then engage in pre-reading exercises in their books, expressing their opinions about the statements they read and give reasons for their choice of opinion. The teacher monitors students' participation and discussions to ensure active engagement. Finally, students are asked about their expectations of the reading passage according to the statements they have read.

While reading stage (60 minutes): This stage aims to develop reading skills and facilitate the effective application of reading strategies. During this phase, students are placed at the center of the learning process, adopting an active role as they engage with the text. Their content schemata are highly activated, allowing them to interact meaningfully with the material and independently explore its content. The teacher assumes the role of a facilitator, creating opportunities for student collaboration and interaction to promote autonomous learning. Students are organized into groups to enhance collaborative work and the construction of meaning. Activities during this stage focus on meaning-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking. These activities include skimming and scanning for keywords and main ideas, utilizing students' existing schemata and background knowledge along with contextual clues to infer the meanings of new words, determining word meanings from their components (such as prefixes, roots, and suffixes), building vocabulary, discussing the main ideas of the passage, making inferences, and recognizing word behavior within context to guess their meanings:

- Skimming and scanning for keywords: The teacher explains strategies of skimming and scanning to facilitate students' use of them in reading. Then, students scan the reading passage, identify key words, and justify their choices to each other. Each group member presents his/her answers, and the group leader presents the collective response to the whole class. The teacher facilitates students' recognition of keywords so that they can easily their reoccurrence in the text. Then, students collectively are asked to list features of key words and justify their choices.
- Skimming and scanning for main ideas: Here students individually re-read the text, and underline sentences that best express the main idea. In group discussions, they provide reasons for their choices. Next, each student is encouraged to contribute a sentence that best expresses the main idea, and the class collectively decides which sentence is most accurate. At last, students deduce characteristics of main ideas and give reasons for their answers. Here the teacher facilitates students' choices of characteristics that best describe the main ideas of a given passage,
- Using students' background knowledge and context clues to guess the meaning of new words: At this stage, the teacher facilitates the idea of encountering new words in a given text. That is, students are guided that they do not need to comprehend the precise meaning of every new word encountered. Instead, they are encouraged to infer the general meaning of unfamiliar words by examining the context, specifically the words that precede and follow the new terms. Students, then, carefully read the passage and attempt to determine the exact meaning of challenging words by understanding the context in which they appear. They are then directed to underline the context clues that assist them in guessing the meaning of the boldfaced words. Following this, students are expected to discuss their answers with the class and provide reasons for their choices. Finally, students reflect on the reading passage using their background knowledge and provide examples from their own experiences in group work.
- Determining the meaning of words from their word parts (prefixes, roots, and suffixes): During this activity, students' attention is directed to word parts, specifically prefixes, and suffixes. The teacher facilitates them to recognize these elements in context and explains how they differ in terms of meaning or grammatical position. Here, students take responsibility for inferring the rules governing prefixes and suffixes and how they alter the meaning and part of speech of a word or root. Next, students provide examples from the reading passage, discuss them within their groups, and have the group leader present the collective answer to the class. The class collectively judges the

correctness of the responses. To further reinforce their understanding, a game is played where each group prepares a list of three words, and the other groups respond with counter words containing prefixes and suffixes. The groups then provide their sentences using the words to demonstrate their mastery of the concept. The teacher here monitors students' participation.

- **Vocabulary Building:** Here students read the vocabulary box provided in their textbook. They are guided to recognize the words presented in the box with their corresponding definitions and check whether their choices of words definitions align with the context or not. Following this, students demonstrate their understanding by constructing new sentences using the newly acquired vocabulary in sentences of their own. Next, students are asked to recognize the grammatical behavior of some words in the reading passage. The teacher facilitates for students the deduction of grammatical rules that governs the grammatical behavior of these patterns in the reading passage. Then, they are guided to read the rules presented in their books, compare it with their deduced ones, and give examples of them from the reading passage. Finally, students provide their own examples to further solidify their understanding of the grammatical concept

After-reading stage (30 minutes): Seated in groups, students actively reflect on what they read: say their comments, relate their experiences, demonstrate their understanding, discuss and share their opinions. The teacher monitors students' participation and discussion, and implicitly correct students' performance. During this stage, students make their own inferences and future predictions about specific details in the text. They draw upon their prior knowledge to make plausible inferences about what might occur subsequently. Finally, students summarize what they read and reflect upon their reading experience, expressing their opinions and making future suggestions.

All in all, the learner-centered lesson plan served as a guide for the researcher of this study to ensure a clear systematic application of the learner-centered three-phase reading model designed in this study. In addition, the researcher adhered to specific patterns of classroom management in order to effectively implement the learner-centered teaching and the teacher-centered instructions in the controlled and experimental reading classes respectively.

3.4.2.3.2.5.3 Classroom Management

Another instrument used in the experiment of this study is a catalogue of two types of classroom management. Classroom management refers to the wide variety of skills teachers employ to ensure students are well-organized, disciplined, attentive, focused, and academically productive throughout the duration of a class (Rothstein & Trumbull, 2008). Woolfolk (2001) presents three key reasons why classroom management is essential in a student-centered environment: it increases the time available for learning, enhances access to educational opportunities, and supports students in cultivating their self-management skills.

In the teacher-centered classroom, the researcher assumes the primary leadership role and maintains strict control over the learning environment. The researcher is responsible for managing and overseeing all aspects of the classroom, including the organization of content, activities, and student behavior. Discipline is enforced by the teacher, who establishes and communicates the rules to the students. A select few students may be designated as the teacher's assistants, while the majority of the class is expected to follow the instructor's directives. The teacher determines the learning outcomes and assessment criteria, which are uniformly applied to all students. Extrinsic rewards, such as words of praise, are commonly used to motivate students. Student autonomy and responsibility are limited, and opportunities for collaborative work or partnerships are minimal in this teacher-centered controlled group.

In learner-centered teaching lessons, on the other hand, leadership is collaborative and shared among both the teacher and students. Management is characterized by providing guidance and support rather than strict control. Students play an active role in classroom operations, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning environment. Discipline is primarily self-regulated, with students taking ownership of their behavior and actions. Also, students actively participate in the management of the classroom, contributing to the development of rules and guidelines through a collaborative process akin to creating a classroom constitution. Intrinsic motivation is emphasized over external rewards, with a focus on fostering a genuine passion for learning. Responsibilities within the classroom are shared among students, promoting a sense of accountability and autonomy. Group work and partnerships are encouraged to enhance learning experiences, providing opportunities for collaboration, diverse perspectives, and enriched learning outcomes for all students.

The table below summarizes the classroom management the researcher followed in teaching the controlled and experimental groups using teacher-centered and learner-centered methods respectively. These were adopted from *Freedom to Learn, 3rd Edition* by Rogers and Frieberg (1994).

Table 3: Classroom Management in Teacher-Centered and Learner-Centered Classrooms

Teacher-Centered Teaching	Learner-Centered Teaching
Teacher is the only leader in the class.	Leadership is shared.
Management is a form of oversight.	Management is a form of guidance.
Teacher takes responsibility for all the work and organization.	Students are facilitators for the operations of the classroom.
Discipline comes from teachers.	Discipline comes from the self.
Few students are the teacher's helpers.	All students have the opportunity to become an integral part of the management of the classroom.
Teacher announces rules and posts them for all students.	Rules are developed by the teacher and students in the form of constitution.
Results are fixed to all students.	Results reflect students' differences.
Rewards are generally extrinsic.	Rewards are generally intrinsic.
Limited responsibilities are allowed for students.	Responsibilities are shared by students in classroom.
Group work and partnerships are few in the class.	Group work and partnership are formed to enrich and broaden the learning opportunities for students.

Note. This table is adopted from *Freedom to Learn* (3rd ed.) by Rogers and Frieberg (1994).

It is worth noting that the researcher of this study used these criteria for classroom management during the teaching phase for both groups: the control group, which followed teacher-centered teaching, and the experimental group, which used learner-centered teaching.

3.4.2.3.2.4 The Post-Test Variable

The post-reading test was a counterbalance of the pre-test (the same questions' entry but the content differs). That is, the post-test included a different reading passage that is extracted from the same book (as that of the pre-test) *English for Libya Secondary 3 Literary Section Course Book*. Also, the post-test, as the pre-test, is related to the five main reading strategies identified by Philip (2003), namely: identifying main ideas, guessing meaning from context, making inferences, answering detailed questions, and determining meaning from words' parts (prefixes and suffixes).

Accordingly, the post-test consisted of a reading passage followed by five questions which, in turn, included five items each of which pertained to the specific reading strategy presented (See *Appendix F*). Question one focused on the ability to guess the meaning of difficult words from context. Question two assessed the skill of answering detailed questions. Question three evaluated the ability to make inferences and answer implied questions. Question four related to determining the meaning of words from their parts, such as prefixes and suffixes. Question five focused on identifying main ideas. Participants were given one hour to complete the test. The researcher distributed the test papers and instructed participants to read and answer the questions carefully.

3.4.2.3.2.5 Data Analysis of the Pre-Test and Post-test

Data obtained from the pre/post-tests of the experiment were analyzed using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) because of its exceptional statistical capabilities and intuitive user interface. SPSS enables researchers to efficiently manage and explore large datasets, offering a diverse range of statistical tests to comprehensively examine research variables. By utilizing SPSS, the precision and accuracy of statistical analyses are enhanced, thereby improving the overall rigor and reliability of research findings (Wellman, 1998).

Analysis of numerical data collected from the pre-test were analyzed using SPSS to address the first research question of this study, which aimed to identify the most difficult reading strategy encountered by participants of this study. On the other hand, a

statistical comparative analysis of the quantitative data obtained from both the pre/post-tests were conducted to address the third research question which sought to evaluate the effectiveness of learner-centered teaching instructions in assisting participants overcome their reading difficulties.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

This study followed established ethical guidelines. Permission to conduct the research was granted by the Head of the Department, and the activities were carried out without disrupting the normal teaching process. During a face-to-face meeting with participants, they were informed that their participation was voluntary. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, personal identifiers were removed from the data. The study posed minimal risk to participants, and all data were used exclusively for academic purposes.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlined the methodological framework of the current study, which is crucial for addressing the research questions. It began with a clear description of the research setting and scope, followed by an overview of the study population. The chapter also explored the research strategies and approaches used, offering justifications for the researcher's selection of a philosophical perspective that aligns with the chosen design and methods. A comprehensive description of the quantitative research methods employed, specifically focusing on a questionnaire and an experiment, was provided. The chapter concluded with a description of the ethical considerations taken into account during the study, laying the foundation for the data analysis procedures, results, and discussion presented in the subsequent section.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis, Results, and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

After thoroughly discussing the methodology and framework of this study in the previous chapter, this chapter presents the data analyses and results obtained from the quantitative research methods. It focuses on the statistical analyses conducted to address the research questions outlined in *Chapter One*. The results are organized in chronological order based on the administration of the research methods, ensuring a logical and coherent flow. Each analysis is accompanied by relevant tables and statistical values to enhance the clarity of the findings. Additionally, the researcher discusses these results, providing interpretations that lay the foundation for the findings and conclusions presented in *Chapter Five*.

4.2 Data Analysis and Results of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered in this study to answer the first research question which was: *To what extent the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi use reading strategies to overcome their reading difficulties?*

To reveal the extent to which participants use reading strategies during manipulating reading activities, a questionnaire was conducted. It comprised 14 items, each accompanied by a Likert-scale that measured the frequency of use, ranging from 'never' to 'always' (see *Appendix B*).

Table 4: Frequencies of Each Item in the Questionnaire

Item	Never		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Item 1	1	1.7	22	36.7	16	26.7	21	35	60
Item 2	12	20	24	40	16	26.7	8	13.3	59
Item 3	5	8.3	10	16.7	19	31.7	25	41.7	59
Item 4	18	30	14	23.3	12	20	15	25	59
Item 5	16	26.7	22	36.7	12	20	9	15	59
Item 6	7	11.7	9	15	20	33.3	23	38.3	59
Item 7	22	36.7	18	30	11	18.3	8	13.3	59
Item 8	12	20	27	45	8	13.3	13	21.7	60
Item 9	1	1.7	16	26.7	10	16.7	32	53.3	59
Item 10	9	15	22	36.7	8	13.3	20	33.3	59
Item 11	14	23.3	22	36.7	15	25	9	15	60
Item 12	22	36.7	11	18.3	8	13.3	19	31.7	60
Item 13	32	53.3	12	20	3	5	13	21.7	60
Item 14	5	8.3	23	38.3	13	21.7	19	31.7	60

The results, detailed in *Table 4* above, illustrate the percentage of responses for each item in the questionnaire. The following section presents a thorough discussion for these results providing insights into students' perceptions and practices regarding participants' reading strategies.

4.2.1 Discussion of the Questionnaire Results

Results obtained from data analysis to participants' responses to the questionnaire are discussed in this section according to the highest frequency ratings on the Likert scale for each item.

Results of data analysis indicated that the highest percentage of frequency use appeared with the percentage (53.3%) of responses on the Likert scale corresponding to the choice of '*never*' which was presented in item 13 in the questionnaire. This meant that more than half of the participants '*never*' used the strategy of '*previewing questions before reading.*' This reflected that this strategy might not be widely adopted and effectively considered by most participants most probably because they prefer to engage with the text itself before considering any accompanying questions, or that they might find it more efficient to read the text and questions simultaneously. It seemed that a portion of participants were not aware of the fact that reading questions first and then moving to read the passage enables them to concentrate more while reading and find answers to the questions they have in mind. And that by concentrating on finding answers to pre-existing questions in mind, they are less likely to become distracted or lose focus while reading. They probably did not recognize that reading with questions in mind keeps them on track and helps them stay engaged throughout the passage. Students need to be informed that having specific questions in mind provides a clear purpose and direction for their reading and that this strategy ultimately leads to better comprehension, as they are reading with a clear objective and are more attentive to the relevant information needed to answer those questions.

Another highest percentage of frequency of strategies use was observed in the response of '*always*' on the Likert scale associated with item nine which presented the strategy of '*reading in detail to answer questions.*' It was found that 53.3% of participants '*always*' practice the strategy of reading in detail to answer questions. This suggested that nearly half of the students recognized the importance of this strategy and consistently engaged in detailed reading to respond to specific questions. Conversely, the remaining 48.3% of

participants did not regularly apply this fundamental reading strategy. This could be considered as a second reason for their reading comprehension difficulties. It seemed that more than a third of participants could not pinpoint details that were explicitly stated and required careful reading and interpretation. This might be because they lack the concentration needed to follow the unfolding events. To effectively answer specific questions, students need to pay closer attention to the material. Mastering this strategy is crucial, as the ability to recognize details is essential for comprehending the overall meaning of the text. Without this strategy, comprehension may falter, and reading will not be effective.

The second highest percentage of the questionnaire results was distinctly identified at 45%, which corresponded to the 'sometimes' choice on the Likert scale concerning participants' frequency of employing the strategy of '*making literal translations while reading.*' This tendency appeared to be an obvious reason for their difficulty in comprehending texts. Word-for-word translation usually fails to convey the intended meaning of the original text accurately (Thriveni, 2002). When students practice this method of translation, they often find that their literal translation does not fit the meaning of the original text, leading to frustration. Additionally, this strategy could be overwhelming as it requires translating every word, distracting from the overall meaning. Participants seemed to lack the knowledge that reading for the overall meaning and gist makes reading much more interesting and less time-consuming than translating word by word. Literal translation, while a common strategy among language learners, could significantly impede reading comprehension and should be discouraged in favor of more effective techniques that focus on understanding the broader context and meaning of the text.

The results also indicated that the third highest percentage was 41.7% of responses which corresponds to the choice of '*always*' on the Likert scale. This meant that less than half of the participants (41.7%) '*always*' utilized '*the reading strategy of having a purpose in mind*' and focusing on the content of the passage, as indicated in item three in the questionnaire. This meant that the rest of the participants (58.3%) did not regularly employ this crucial reading strategy. It seemed that more than half of the EFL Libyan students in this study were not accustomed to frequently employing this reading strategy, likely due to a lack of understanding regarding when and how to apply it effectively. Additionally, the lack of this strategy might be attributed to teachers not

emphasizing the importance of reading with a specific purpose. Furthermore, it was speculated that many participants did not take responsibility for establishing a clear purpose for their reading, as they have become accustomed to a passive role in their traditional educational experiences, which often involve a heavy reliance on teachers to facilitate learning and provide explanations for the questions posed.

The results further clearly illustrated that 40% of participants '*sometimes*' (rather than always) apply the strategy of '*skimming or scanning texts to search for main ideas*' presented in the second item of the questionnaire. It seemed that a number of participants neither understood the concepts of skimming and scanning nor were they aware of the appropriate contexts in which to employ these strategies. It became clear that EFL Libyan students in this study did not recognize that skimming and scanning are essential reading skills that can enhance both their comprehension and reading speed. Students' unfamiliarity with these two strategies appeared to stem from their instructional methods, which did not introduce or practice these strategies in class, ultimately affecting their overall reading proficiency.

The results further revealed that only 38.3% of participants reported '*always*' applying '*the skimming strategy to identify important information in a text,*' as indicated by item number six in the questionnaire. This implied that a significant majority, 61.7%, did not regularly employ this essential reading strategy. Consequently, it appeared that participants of this study struggled to recognize important information through skimming. Similar to the previous strategy, this issue could be attributed to a lack of practice and reinforcement of skimming techniques in classroom settings.

In addition, the results indicated that 38.3% of participants '*often*' employ the strategy of '*rereading texts to enhance comprehension,*' as outlined in item 14 of the questionnaire. This suggests that only a small portion of participants, specifically 13 students, engage in rereading to improve their understanding. This finding might reflect a tendency among students to depend on their teachers for comprehension rather than making personal efforts to read and understand the material independently. It can be confidently inferred that the instructional methods employed by teachers provide greater opportunities for them to explain and facilitate texts, thereby diminishing the emphasis on students deducing the meaning through individual rereading.

Also, the results revealed that more than a third of the participants (22 out of 60) *'never'* employed the strategies of *'guessing the meaning of a text by activating their background knowledge,'* nor did they utilize the strategy of *'continuing reading despite encountering difficult words,'* as indicated by items number seven and 12, respectively. The highest frequency of use for these two items was recorded as *'never'* reflecting a usage rate of 36.7% for each strategy. This insufficient application of these crucial strategies likely arose from their teachers not implementing these strategies in the classroom or activating students' background knowledge to facilitate their understanding of the overall meaning. It seemed that their teachers did not underscore the potential importance of students' engagement with the content of the text effectively. Furthermore, it was observed that more than half of the participants tended to give up reading when they encounter difficult unknown words, leading to frustration. This was likely because of a lack of knowledge of the facts that subsequent sentences often clarify meanings of unknown words in the context, and the fact that it is a common occurrence for readers to come across unfamiliar words, but this does not necessitate stopping. Continuing to read enables readers to understand the overall meaning and provide an approximate meaning to these words based on the context. It was clear from the findings that the majority of participants were not instructed on how to derive the meanings of unfamiliar words from contextual clues, which would enable them to deduce the meanings of unknown words without disrupting the flow of reading.

The percentage of 36.7% was also recognized as the highest percentage of *'sometimes'* responses on the Likert scale associated with the questionnaire items number one, five, and 10. This indicated that participants of this study *'sometimes'* rather than *'always'* applied the reading strategies of: *'Using keywords to identify the main idea, employing prediction skills while reading, and utilizing context clues to understand vocabulary meanings.'* This indicated that more than one-third of the participants (22 students) did not regularly employ these fundamental strategies while reading. This lack of application could be attributed to their insufficient understanding of the techniques and procedures necessary for effectively utilizing these strategies. It appeared that students were not adequately trained to recognize keywords that lead to the identification of main ideas, nor did they understand that keywords ultimately point to main ideas and vice versa. Additionally, it was evident that participants struggled to make appropriate predictions related to the reading text, which might be linked to a lack of interest in the

material and insufficient engagement with the text. Furthermore, it was indicated that more than one-third of the students did not utilize context clues to infer the meanings of vocabulary. This could largely be attributed to their instructional experiences, which did not incorporate these strategies. Overall, it was clear that most participants lacked awareness of the effective application of these reading strategies.

The results of the data analysis of the questionnaire also revealed that 36.7% of participants '*sometimes*' applied the strategy of '*using contextual clues, such as suffixes, prefixes, and semantic knowledge (synonyms, antonyms), to understand unfamiliar vocabulary*' associated with item number 11 in the questionnaire. This percentage highlighted a significant gap in participants' strategic reading skills. It seemed that participants did not possess the necessary skills to infer the meanings of complex words by breaking them down into their constituent parts, such as prefixes and suffixes. This knowledge gap might stem from a lack of instructional focus on this strategy in their reading education. It was speculated that participants lack the knowledge necessary to approximate the meanings of complex words by segmenting them into their constituent parts, particularly suffixes and prefixes. Probably they had not received sufficient explicit instruction or practice in employing morphological analysis and contextual clues to decipher the meanings of unfamiliar words while reading.

The results adopted from the questionnaire further indicated that, for item number four, the highest percentage (30%) on the Likert scale was associated with the response choice of '*never*.' This suggests that 30% of participants did not employ the strategy of '*activating their background knowledge while reading a text*.' Such a finding highlighted a concerning level of passivity among participants in their independent engagement with reading materials. It also pointed to a potential inability or unwillingness to actively interact with the text, which might be attributed to a lack of comprehension or an overreliance on teacher-led explanations. Additionally, this issue could be linked to the observation that many EFL lecturers in Libya are not familiar with the technique of creating mental images during reading and do not incorporate this strategy into their instruction (Zraga, 2018).

4.3 Data Analysis and Results of the Pre-Test

At the beginning of the analysis of the data obtained from the pre-test, it was essential to evaluate the reliability of the test scale. This assessment ensured that the test accurately measures what it is intended to evaluate.

4.3.1 The Reliability of the Scale

The reliability coefficient was measured using Cronbach's α for the pretest. The results indicated that the test showed acceptable internal consistency. The pretest had relatively higher reliability, Cronbach's $\alpha = .760$ (see table 4.3). For educational research, this value is considered acceptable and the scale is reliable (Kline, 1999).

4.3.2 Discussion of the Pre-Test Results

The pre-test was administered to answer the second research question of this study which was: *What are the most difficult reading strategies that the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi encounter in comprehending English reading texts?*

Data collected from participants' responses to the pre-test were analyzed in relation to their individual scores for each question. The frequency of responses for each question was calculated to assess the distribution of easy and difficult questions. *Table 5* below presents the frequencies of responses from the entire sample for each test question, including the number of participants who responded, the highest score achieved, the frequency of that highest score, and the corresponding percentages. This analysis provided important insights into the performance levels of participants on the pre-test items.

Table 5: Frequencies of Pre-Test Scores for the Sample Size

Q	Whole Sample Size			
	N	Highest score obtained	Frequency	%
Pre-test Q1	60	2	22	36.7
Pre-test Q2	60	2	24	40
Pre-test Q3	60	4	25	41.7
Pre-test Q4	60	1	18	30
Pre-test Q5	60	2	22	36.7

In *Table 5* above, the results indicated that a significant number of participants (41.7%) experienced difficulties in the strategy of *'recognizing the meanings of complex*

vocabulary derived from their morphological components,' presented in the third question in the pre-test. For instance, many participants could not recognize and interpret the suffix *-er* in the word *photographer* as denoting a person who acts rather than someone associated with the photograph itself. Additionally, they did not know that the suffix *-tion* in the word *explanation* signified the process of explaining rather than the action itself. This could be attributed to their limited vocabulary repertoire and their lack of awareness regarding the potential benefits of incorporating prefixes and suffixes in comprehending word meanings. Furthermore, it might be that the instructional methods they received had not adequately emphasized the importance of such techniques for understanding the meanings of complex vocabulary from their parts (suffixes and prefixes). Students need to participate in vocabulary activities to expand their lexicon and, consequently, improve their comprehension (Ahmed, 2015). Moreover, students' complete reliance on school materials, coupled with a lack of engagement in supplementary intensive reading practices, might have hindered the growth of their vocabulary bank.

It was also revealed from the results of the pre-test that the two strategies of '*guessing meanings of new words from context*' and '*identifying main ideas*' related to the first and the fifth test questions respectively, ranked second among the most challenging reading skills for participants giving an equal percentage of (36.7%) for both skills. It seemed that students' vocabulary repertoire was below the threshold level which hindered their ability to make educated guesses regarding the meanings of unfamiliar words. They demonstrated difficulty in comprehending both the preceding and subsequent words associated with the unknown terms, indicating a lack of understanding of the immediate context. As a result, they found it challenging to infer meanings independently and often resorted to seeking assistance from teachers or consulting dictionaries, rather than engaging in independent deductive learning. Furthermore, participants' inability to effectively identify the main ideas within reading texts could be attributed to a lack the knowledge of how to construct the characteristics that define these ideas. Students might not have received sufficient training to effectively identify the main idea within a reading passage. It appeared that they required intensive practice in classrooms on how to construct meanings related to the main ideas and how to differentiate between main ideas and supporting details. This strategy is essential for enhancing their

comprehension and analytical abilities in reading (Advocates of the constructivist theory: Jonassen, 1991; Richardson, 1997; Weimer, 2002).

Additionally, the results of the pre-test indicated that the strategy of '*answering detailed questions*' related to the second question in the test ranked as the third most challenging reading strategy for participants, with only 40% of correct responses. It was indicated that only half of the participants (30 students) were able to accurately identify the details required in the question. This might be attributed to their lack of knowledge regarding effective reading strategies that would enable them to engage with the text in a manner that enhances comprehension of certain details within the text. Furthermore, students' difficulties in maintaining focus and concentration while reading could significantly hinder their ability to identify specific details within the text. Contributing factors such as large class sizes and limited time allocated for reading activities might also restrict students' opportunities to thoroughly read, concentrate, and comprehend the details of the reading passages.

Surprisingly, the skill of '*making inferences*' presented in the third test question appeared to be the least difficult among the assessed competencies, with a success rate of 41.7%. This suggests that less than half of the student population possesses the ability to reflect on the content they have read and formulate reasonable inferences based on their understanding. However, despite making inferences being considered the least difficult reading skill for some participants, more than half of them continue to struggle with this strategy presenting a percentage of (58.3%) of incorrect responses. One interpretation for this difficulty could be largely associated with students' lack of engagement with the reading material. When students are not interested in what they are reading, they often lack the aptitude to reflect on the content and draw meaningful inferences (Cavilla, 2017). Furthermore, this might be attributed to the reading instruction they had received might not have adequately emphasized the activation of students' background knowledge which is a crucial process for understanding new information (Advocates of schema theory including Alderson, 2000; Alptekin, 2006; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; McKay, 1987).

4.4 Data Analysis and Results of the Experiment

Analysis of data obtained from the pre-test and post-test of the experiment was administered to answer the third research question of this research which was: *What*

effectiveness do teacher-centered and learner-centered approaches have in assisting the First-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi to overcome their reading difficulties?

First, it was essential to conduct descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of the experiment's sample. This involved determining whether the observed results have meaningful interpretations and contribute to the research question or not. The following section provides the scientific evidence to support this experiment.

4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

First, descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the characteristics of the experiment's sample. *Table 6* below presents the number of participant (N), the mean (M), and standard deviations (SD) for the variables examined in this study.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of the Final Scores for Both Groups

Group	Test	N	M	SD
Control group	Pre-test	30	7.50	5.710
	Post-test	30	13.07	3.850
Experimental group	Pre-test	30	7.67	4.908
	Post-test	30	20.87	5.947

The above table reports the total number of students who took the tests, as well as the mean and standard deviation for each test. It is clear from the table that the sample size was equal for both groups. It is also clear that a slight difference in the mean pre-test scores between the control group and the experimental group, with scores of 7.50 and 7.67, respectively. This minor variation reflected a comparable level of reading knowledge among the participants at the outset of the experiment. That is, this minor difference in the pre-test scores between the two groups proved equality among participants in their linguistic level which was crucial for ensuring that any differences observed in the post-test scores could be confidently attributed to the experimental treatment rather than pre-existing differences between the groups.

Furthermore, *Table 6* reveals that the means were slightly different between the control group and the experimental group in the pre-test scores, being 7.50 and 7.67, respectively. The gap increased between them in the post-test scores, which were 13.07 and 20.87. this indicated that both groups improved and achieved better reading knowledge.

To reveal the significant mean difference between the two groups in the experiment, a t-test statistical analysis was conducted

Table 7: The Groups Differences Using T-Test

	N	M	T	DF	P
Pre-test	30	.167	.121	58	.904
Post-test	30	.167	6.031	58	.000

Note. P-value was set on 0.05 (2-tailed).

The results of the t-test statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between both groups ($t(58) = 6.031$, $p < 0.05$).

4.4.2 Discussion of the Experiment Results

Results of data analysis obtained from the post-test were compared with that of the pre-test to reveal the effectiveness of teacher-centered and learner-centered teaching instructions in assisting participants overcome their reading difficulties. The results revealed that the mean scores of both the control group and the experimental group in the post-tests were higher than their respective pre-test scores, with values of 13.07 and 20.87, respectively (see *Table 6*). This indicated that both groups experienced improvements in their reading comprehension abilities when their pre-test and post-test results were compared. However, the focus of this experiment was to compare the degree of effectiveness between teaching methods based on a learner-centered approach and those based on a teacher-centered approach. The statistical analysis of the t-test showed that the gap between the control and experimental groups widened in the post-test scores (.121 for the control group and 6.031 for the experimental group), indicating that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group (see *Table 7*).

To enhance the clarity of the results of the data analysis, graphical representations of the percentage-based analysis calculations for the pre-test and post-test results are presented in the following section.

4.4.3 A Percentage-Based Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

In this section, the researcher of this study reanalyzed the data obtained from the pre-test and post-test using percentage-based analysis instead of a *t*-test. This approach allows for a clearer understanding of the distribution of responses and provides insights into the relative frequency of specific strategies employed by participants. By

presenting the results in terms of percentages, trends and patterns in the data that may be overlooked in traditional mean comparisons are highlighted.

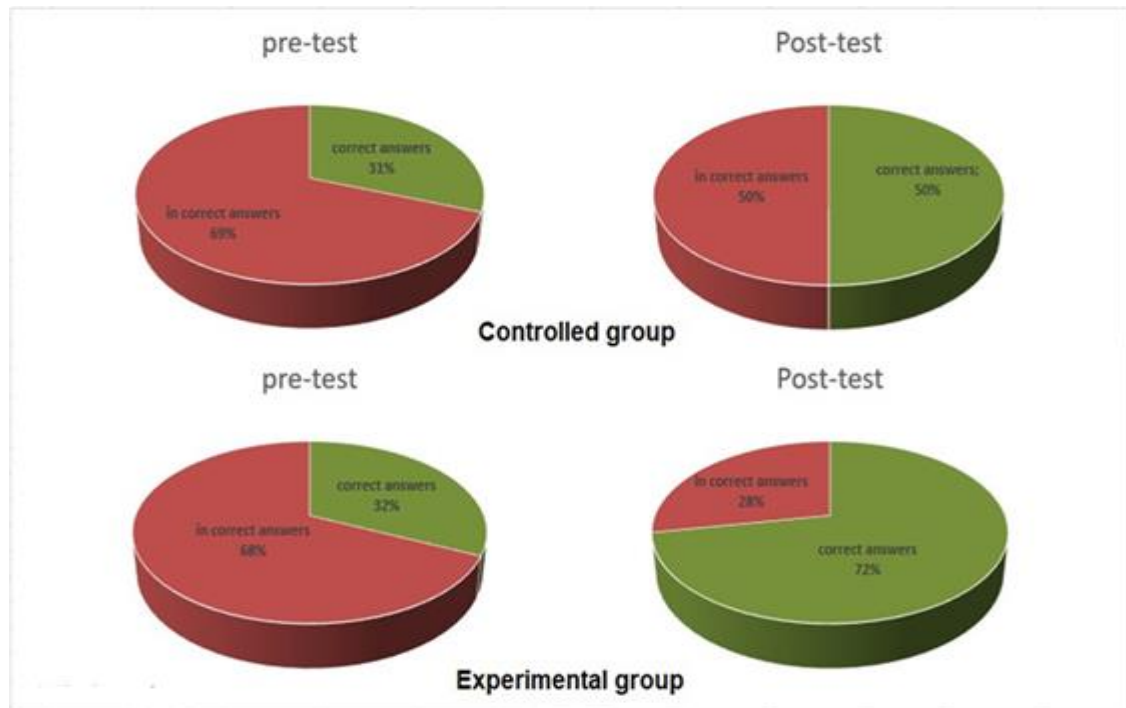


Figure 9: Percentages of the Scores of Groups in Pre-and Post-Tests

In *Figure 9*, the graphical representations of the pre-test on the left demonstrated that both the control group and the experimental group achieved nearly identical percentages of incorrect responses in the pre-test, with 69% and 68% of answers marked in red, respectively. Additionally, the scores for correct responses, indicated in green, were comparable, with percentages of 31% for the control group and 32% for the experimental group. These findings of the pre-test suggested that participants of the study exhibited similar levels of reading ability at the outset of the experiment and that any changes observed in the post-test scores can be confidently attributed to the intervention implemented during the experiment, rather than to any other external variables.

The graphical representation of the post-test on the right indicated that both groups demonstrated improved reading abilities as evidenced by the post-test results. For the control group, the percentage of incorrect responses, depicted in red, decreased from 69% to 50%, while the rate of correct responses, shown in green, increased from 31% to 50%. Similarly, the experimental group experienced notable gains; the percentage of incorrect responses fell from 68% to 28%, and the percentage of correct responses rose

substantially from 32% to 72%. These results highlighted the effectiveness of the interventions applied in enhancing reading performance for both groups. *Figure 10* below illustrates differences in the performance of both groups in the post-test.

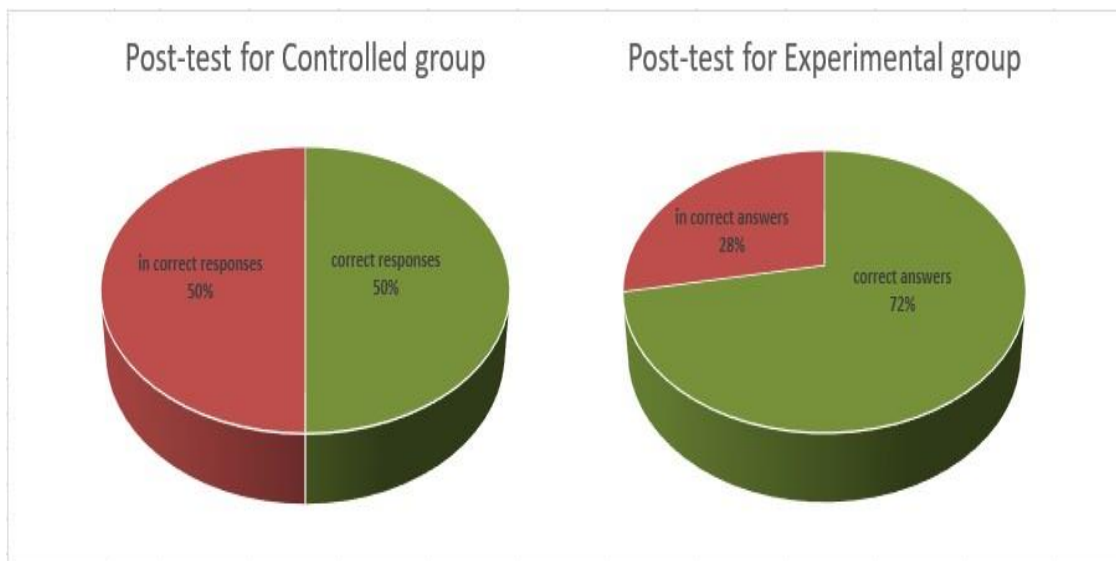


Figure 10: Groups Differences Using Percentages

It is clear from *Figure 10* above that the percentage of incorrect responses for the experimental group, represented in red, was significantly lower at 28% compared to the control group's 50%. Conversely, the percentage of correct responses for the experimental group indicated in green, was higher at 72%, while the control group achieved only 50%. These results clearly illustrated that the experimental group exceeded the control group in terms of reading ability, highlighting the effectiveness of the intervention implemented in the study.

Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, the data analyses are presented and examined in detail. A comprehensive overview of the results related to each research question is provided, laying the groundwork for their interpretation and discussion. The chapter demonstrates a systematic approach to data analysis, creating a solid foundation for clearly articulating the findings and conclusions in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and conclusions based on the results obtained from the data analysis discussed in the previous chapter. It is structured to align with the chronological order of the research methods used in the study. The findings are linked to existing literature, along with conclusions and implications for practice. Additionally, the chapter highlights the contributions to knowledge made by this study, addressing its significance in the EFL context. Some limitations are acknowledged in this chapter. Finally, it concludes with recommendations for teachers, learners, curriculum designers, and decision-makers to enhance the improvement of English reading proficiency among Libyan EFL students.

5.2 Findings of the Study

Based on the preceding discussions of data analysis and results presented in *Chapter Four*, findings related to each research question of this current are presented in the subsequent sections.

5.2.1 Findings Related to the First Research Question

To what extent the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi use reading strategies to overcome their reading difficulties?

It was revealed that the extent to which Libyan EFL students use effective reading strategies was below level. Many students rarely used skimming and scanning strategies on the introduction and conclusion to grasp the overall structure of a text. Most of them did not utilize word components to guess meanings. The majority of them struggled with reading strategies needed to handle difficult vocabulary, such as figuring out word meanings from context and inferring meanings from prefixes and suffixes. They also had trouble recognizing keywords that help identify main ideas. Furthermore, they showed clear deficiencies in using skimming and scanning techniques. Many lacked knowledge of how to read with specific questions or purposes in mind. When they encountered difficult words, they often gave up rather than continue to seek the overall meaning.

These Findings were in line with Rashed (2016) whose study revealed that EFL students at Al-Zawia University in Tripoli, Libya struggled to understand an English passage because of their deficiencies in reading comprehension strategies, and Elbleazi (2006) who concluded that EFL Libyan students lacked training in reading strategies, leading to poor reading comprehension. Further, the findings were consistent with Benrabha (2015) whose findings indicated that Libyan EFL participants experienced reading difficulties due to their inadequate activation of reading strategies.

Moreover, findings were also in alignment with Dallagi (2021) whose results revealed that EFL Tunisian students exhibit reading difficulties because they were not fully aware of the effectiveness of reading strategies. Also, Palaming (2018, p. 2510) found that EFL Omani students have reading difficulties because they "lack the necessary reading strategies that could aid them to understand what they read." Also, Abdul Samad (2017) concluded that EFL learners experience difficulties in the reading sections of TOEFL test assessments due to their lack of knowledge regarding the reading strategies that should be employed, and Nezami (2012) revealed that insufficient utilization of reading strategies during the process of comprehension, resulted in significant challenges for EFL Arab students at Najran University in Saudi Arabia when attempting to comprehend an English text.

Further, the findings were in line with Hidayati (2018) who concluded that a lack of knowledge of strategies in reading comprehension was the main reason for EFL Indonesian students. Also, Chandran and Shah (2019) found that the primary reasons for reading difficulties faced in EFL reading comprehension in Malaysia included unfamiliarity with the appropriate processes (strategies) for understanding text content.

Though not completely compatible, the findings of the questionnaire were partially in alignment with the conclusions drawn by Mohamed (2016), Al-Beckay and Reddy (2015), and Omar (2014), who attributed deficiencies in reading comprehension among Libyan EFL students to a lack of awareness among many lecturers who tend to employ traditional methods that might not adequately address reading strategies and the needs of students in developing their reading abilities.

Moreover, a good number of empirical investigations have reached similar conclusions and established a positive relationship between learning reading strategies and overcoming reading comprehension difficulties among students (Alotaibi, 2022; Bagga

and Mckee, 2023; Brookbank et al., 1999; Chen et al., 2022; Eyupoglu, 2023; Hamid, 2022; Martin-Ruiz & González-Valenzuela, 2022; Olson & Gee, 1991; Rraku, 2013; Samarajeewa, 2023; Tadayonifar et al., 2021; Zraga, 2018).

5.2.2 Findings Related to the Second Research Question

What are the most difficult reading strategies that the first-semester students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi encounter in comprehending English reading texts?

Based on the discussion of data analysis and results obtained from the pre-test (see *Chapter Four*), it was found that the most difficult reading strategy for the majority of participants in this study was the ability to recognize meanings of complex vocabulary derived from their morphological components, specifically suffixes and prefixes. Furthermore, it was indicated that the strategy of guessing the meanings of new words from context and identifying main ideas ranked simultaneously as the second most difficult reading strategy for most participants in this study. In addition, results revealed that the third most challenging reading strategy for participants was answering detailed questions, and the strategy of making meaningful inferences was the fifth most difficult reading strategy among a number of participants.

These findings were consistent with those of Benrabha (2015) and Rashed (2016) which indicated that Libyan EFL students in the study encountered reading difficulties in understanding main ideas, supporting details, implied meanings, conclusions, and vocabulary. In addition, findings of the pre-test results showed similarities with Alghail and Mahfoodh (2016) who noted that Libyan EFL students were experiencing reading difficulties in working out the meaning of new words and identifying supporting ideas. Findings also partially aligned with Ghwela et al. (2017) who noted that Libyan EFL students had problems with predicting, summarizing, and making inferences strategies.

Furthermore, findings derived from the discussion of the pre-test results were compatible with the results found by Abdul Samad et al. (2017) who revealed five main reading difficulties experienced by undergraduate EFL students in comprehending a reading text, they were as follows: First, answering implied detail questions correctly. Second, answering stated detail questions correctly. Third, the use of context to give meanings of difficult words. Fourth, answering main ideas' questions correctly. And finally, determining meanings from word parts (Abdul Samad et al., 2017).

Similarly, the findings of the pre-test were in line with Saraswati et al. (2021) who conducted a study to examine the reading comprehension difficulties experienced by EFL students in Indonesia. The study revealed that identifying the main idea posed the greatest challenge for the students, with a difficulty percentage of 72%. This was closely followed by the task of locating references, which had a difficulty percentage of 70%. Difficulties in understanding vocabulary and finding specific information were reported at 68% and 67%, respectively, indicating only a one percent difference between these two aspects. Conversely, making inferences was identified as the least challenging strategy, with a difficulty percentage of 63%. Likewise, Septia et al. (2022) examined the difficulties EFL students encountered in learning reading comprehension at high schools in Indonesia. Their study indicated that the challenges faced by students included answering questions related to the main idea, with a difficulty percentage of 53.67%, followed by vocabulary issues at 47.84%, and difficulties in making inferences at 45.34%. In addition, findings were in line with Ramadhianti and Somba (2023) who found that the most difficult reading strategy for EFL Indonesian students were distinguishing between the main ideas and supporting details, getting the main idea between paragraphs, relating topic and background knowledge, understanding vocabulary and inferring the text.

Moreover, findings related to the second research question were consistent with Nuralasari and Haryudin (2021) and Chawwang (2008) whose results indicated that the most critical problems for EFL students were in identifying the meaning of difficult words and topics, the main idea of the passage, and lack of vocabulary. Further, the findings of the pre-test were in line with Palaming (2018, p. 2509) whose "research findings revealed that the students had a hard time in understanding vocabulary in context as well as in getting the main idea," and Alotaibi (2022) and Alharbi (2022) whose research indicated that the most significant reading problems among EFL Saudi students were limited vocabulary and difficulties in understanding the meaning of the text.

Moreover, the findings of the pre-test were in alignment with Hidayati (2018), whose study revealed that EFL students mostly have reading difficulties in understanding vocabulary, determining the main idea, and finding specific information in the texts. Similarly, Al-Jarrah and Ismail (2018), Nurjanah (2018), and Qrquez and Rashid (2017) identified that unfamiliar vocabulary was one of several factors contributing to the

reading difficulties experienced by EFL students. Besides Chandran Shah (2019) found that the primary challenges they faced in EFL reading comprehension in Malaysia included unfamiliarity with vocabulary and difficulties in identifying the main idea.

Although not entirely compatible, findings from the discussion of the pre-test results were partially similar to those of Palaming (2018) who concluded that EFL Omani readers often struggled to grasp the gist of the texts they encountered due to a lack of understanding and strategies necessary to tackle new, complex words. And Abugharsa and Elamin (2024), Al-Khasawneh (2019), Benrabha (2015), Guna (2023), Ma and Lin (2015), and Quinn et al. (2015) whose research indicated that knowledge of complex vocabulary was crucial for EFL students' reading comprehension, as any deficiency in this area adversely affects their ability to understand and interpret the meanings of English texts. They also noted that as vocabulary complexity increased, learners faced greater challenges in comprehending what they had read.

Interestingly, Findings of this study extended the findings of previous studies conducted by Abdul-Samad (2017), Abugharsa and Elamin (2024), Alghail and Mahfoodh (2016), Al-Khasawneh (2019), Alotaibi, (2021), Antoni (2014), Benrabha (2015), Chawwang (2008), Ghwela et al. (2017), Mohamed (2016), Nurmalasari and Haryudin (2021), Palaming (2018), Rashid (2016), Samad and Fitriani (2016), Saraswati et al. (2021), and Septia et al. (2022).

5.2.3 Findings Related to the Third Research Question

From the discussion of the experiment results (see *Chapter Four*), it was found that both the controlled and experimental groups, those taught using a teacher-centered approach and those taught with a learner-centered approach, demonstrated improvements in their reading comprehension abilities. However, participants who received learner-centered instructional methods achieved superior results compared to those taught through teacher-centered methods. These findings provide evidence for the effectiveness of the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* in helping EFL students overcome their reading difficulties. The empirical evidence collected from this study fulfills the conditions necessary for adapting any model in language teaching and learning, which emphasizes that models require empirical support and logical implications to be practical in the field (Grabe, 2009).

Findings of the experiment in this study were consistent with those of Bashang and Zenouzagh (2021, p. 40), who found that "the student-centered approach was recognized as more suited for EFL teaching." Also, the findings were in line with Al-Zu'be (2013) and Lak, et al. (2017) who revealed that learner-centered instruction was more effective than teacher-centered instruction in improving EFL learners' reading comprehension performance. Furthermore, findings were in alignment with Huijie, (2012) who concluded that EFL teachers should be fully aware of the necessity and pressure of innovation in the present foreign language teaching, and adjust their roles in language teaching classes timely to the new student-centered teaching pattern. In addition, the findings of the experiment were in line with Ahmed (2013), and Geisli (2009) whose findings indicated that the level of learning success achieved was notably greater in the group that utilized student-centered approaches in contrast to the group that employed teacher-centered methods.

On the other hand, the findings of this study were in contrast with Zohrabi et al. (2012) who compared a learner-centered strategy with a teacher-centered approach in teaching English grammar as a foreign language in an Iranian high school setting. The researchers advocated for the use of a teacher-centered approach, arguing that it more effectively supports Iranian EFL students in enhancing their grammatical skills compared to the learner-centered approach.

5.3 Conclusions and Implications

Based on the findings of this research, it is evident that Libyan EFL students lack knowledge of the appropriate use of essential reading strategies. Their application of these key strategies when engaging with reading texts is quite weak. Additionally, the most challenging reading strategy for these students is deriving the meanings of complex words from their components; their understanding of how to use morphological components of vocabulary to guess meanings is below the threshold level. Most Libyan EFL students struggle to deduce meanings of new words using contextual clues and exhibit a clear deficiency in recognizing the main ideas of given texts. Furthermore, they face significant challenges in answering detailed questions and identifying specific details within reading passages. Identifying implied details related to various questions also poses a substantial obstacle to their reading proficiency.

Additionally, it can be confidently concluded that the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*, specifically designed for this study, has effectively helped Libyan EFL students overcome their reading difficulties. The model demonstrated empirical effectiveness in increasing these students' reading proficiency and enhancing their knowledge of how to apply essential reading strategies when engaging with texts. Furthermore, the application of this model in the study has fostered a greater sense of responsibility among students for their reading learning process.

This conclusion highlights the critical need to adopt this model in EFL reading classrooms. It is suggested that by applying this model, EFL teachers can create a more dynamic and interactive learner-centered environment in the Libyan EFL context. This model addresses students' reading difficulties while empowering them to develop essential reading strategies independently. Consequently, the study emphasizes the necessity of applying this model in reading instruction to enhance students' reading abilities in particular, and improve language skills and overall learning outcomes in general.

5.4 Practical Considerations

This study has significant practical considerations for key stakeholders in the educational system in Libya, including teachers, learners, curriculum designers, and decision-makers. The findings of this research could facilitate practical transformative changes to the current instructional methods employed in EFL reading lessons during university education in Libya.

The researcher of this study emphasizes that there is a pressing need to practically implement this *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*, as proposed herein, as an instructional solution to help EFL Libyan students overcome their reading comprehension difficulties. This model (see *Figure 11* below) facilitates a step-by-step transition toward a more learner-centered learning environment, enabling students to progressively assume more active and responsible roles in their educational journeys.

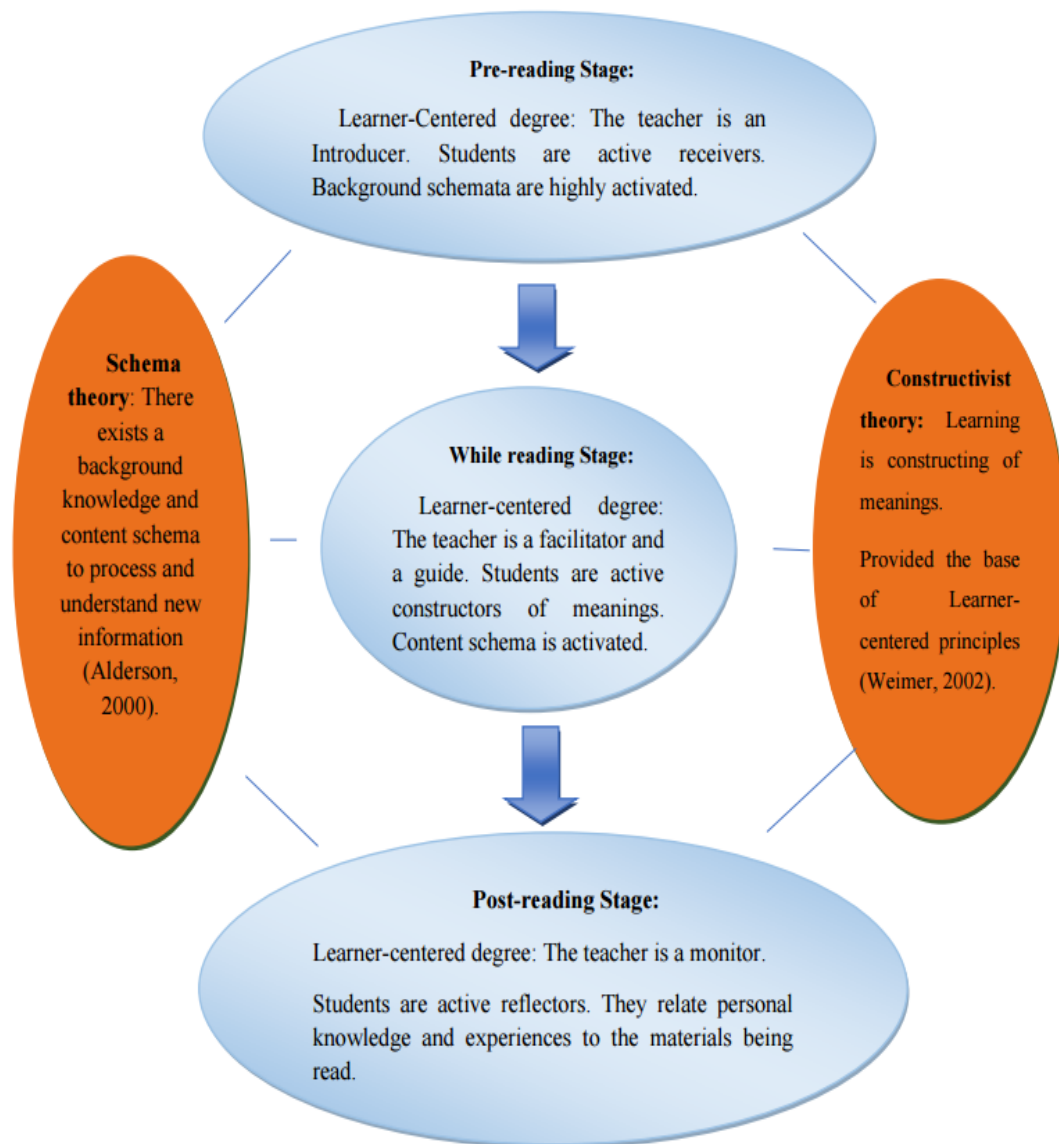


Figure 11: *The Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*

By placing learners at the center of the learning journey and encouraging their application of diverse reading strategies, teachers can facilitate enhancements in students' reading comprehension performance. It is essential for students to be motivated to explore, plan, monitor, practice, and evaluate their reading activities. Such engagement will not only increase their awareness of the reading strategies employed but also contribute to the development of effective learning outcomes in general.

The Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model serves as a guide for teachers to gradually implement varying degrees of learner-centered instruction across three reading stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. This model was developed in response to the ongoing demands for more research aimed at improving instructional practices in EFL classrooms in Libya (Ahmed, 2015; El Mezughi, 2021;

Zraga, 2018), as well as the need to motivate Libyan EFL teachers to refine their teaching methods and enhance their professional qualifications, ultimately striving for excellence in both teaching and learning (AlManafi, 2023; Elramli, 2023; Mohamed, 2016; Omar, 2018). Additionally, the model addresses the lack of knowledge and proficiency in teaching reading among Libyan EFL teachers, which limit students' reading abilities (Abosnan, 2016; Al-Beckay & Reddy, 2015; Algwil, 2024; AlManafi, 2023; Azzouz & Ben-Taleb in Omar, 2020; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Elashhab, 2018; Elmadwi & Shepherd, 1914; Elramli, 2023; Omar, 2020; Suwaed, 2011; Zeat, 2020; Zraga, 2018). Furthermore, there is an ongoing demand for improved EFL reading instruction that emphasizes the extensive practice of diverse reading strategies (Alotaibi, 2022; Dallagi, 2021; Tadayonifar et al., 2021).

Given that Libyan EFL classrooms are predominantly characterized by traditional teacher-centered instruction (Abushina, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020) where "it is the teacher who speaks and the learners are merely passive listeners" (Hmaid, 2018, p. 692), and the fact that Libyan students face significant learning difficulties because of they rely on teachers and their tendency to adopt a passive role in the learning process (Algwil, 2024; Elmahjoub, 2014), a sudden and complete transition to a strong form of learner-centered teaching would be impractical. Consequently, the researcher, in her model, advocates for a gradual implementation of varying degrees of learner-centered teaching (Brandl, 2002; Nunan, 2013; Weimer, 2002) throughout three reading stages (pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading). In this framework, the teacher's role ranged from an introducer to a facilitator and ultimately to a monitor and guide. This gradual progression leads students to the final stage, where they assume the highest degree of learner-centeredness and take full responsibility for their learning. By adopting this gradual approach, learner-centered teaching can be effectively implemented within the Libyan EFL context, as well as in other traditionally teacher-centered environments.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

The current study made a valuable contribution to the understanding of EFL reading difficulties, both within the specific context of Libya and in broader EFL settings. Building on prior research deepens our comprehension of the reading difficulties faced by Arabic-speaking EFL students in Libya. The findings of this study were directly relevant to both the EFL context in Libya and the broader EFL landscape.

In non-Arabic-speaking EFL contexts, most published studies on reading difficulties have primarily concentrated on identifying effective instructional techniques to address these difficulties without proposing possible practical solutions, for example, Yang (2021) Gedik and Akyolii (2022) within the EFL context of Turkey, Yang (2021), Qian et al. (2023), and Zhong et al. (2024) in China. Additionally, some researchers (Kheirzadeh & Tavakoli, 2012) have explored students' perceptions of reading difficulties and have called for further investigation to provide empirical solutions for these difficulties. Other studies have examined reading difficulties and recommended updates to instructional approaches that emphasize reading strategies, as seen in research by Al-Jarrah and Ismail (2018), Chandran and Shah (2019), Chua and Sulaiman (2021), Nurmalasari and Haryudin (2021), Saraswati et al. (2021), Tadayonifar et al. (2021), Hamid (2022), Septia et al. (2022), Guna (2023), and Ramadhianti and Somba (2023).

In the EFL context for Arabic-speaking students, several studies have highlighted the reading difficulties faced by learners and have called for enhanced instructional methods that emphasize effective reading strategies to improve comprehension. Research conducted by Zayyad (2009) in Palestine, Abdul Samad (2017), Alharbi (2022), and Alotaibi (2022) in Saudi Arabia, Palaming (2018) in Oman, Al-Jamal et al. (2013) and Qrquez and Rashid (2017) in Jordan, and Dallagi (2021) in Tunisia collectively advocate for a more focused approach to reading instruction. These studies stress the need for instructional strategies tailored to address the specific challenges encountered by EFL learners in these regions.

In Libya, reading difficulties have become a significant concern among researchers. Elbleazi (2006) emphasized the importance of reading strategies to assist Libyan EFL students in overcoming these obstacles, although he did not discuss practical implementation in classroom settings. Rashed (2016) and Elmahjoub (2014) further highlighted the need for reading strategies without offering specific methods for application. And Benrabha (2015) investigated the specific reasons behind reading challenges but failed to propose practical solutions. Alghail and Mahfoodh (2016) and Ghwela et al. (2017) also focused on identifying reading difficulties without providing remedial strategies. In contrast, Alagoriya and Elraggas (2022) examined whether extensive reading courses using graded readers could alleviate reading challenges faced by EFL students but did not address the underlying causes of comprehension

difficulties. More recently, Algwil (2024) attributed some reading difficulties to a lack of independent skills and autonomous learning, yet did not offer specific methodologies for enhancing these competencies. Collectively, these studies underscore the need for comprehensive instructional approaches that address both reading difficulties and practical solutions.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, very few studies have provided empirical solutions for EFL students' reading difficulties. This research made a unique contribution by developing the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* specifically tailored to the dynamics and perspectives of the Libyan EFL context, effectively addressing students' reading difficulties. This study helps to bridge a gap in the literature concerning studies in EFL contexts more broadly. Consequently, this research contributes to knowledge, being the first study to propose a learner-centered model aligned with the ideologies of the Libyan EFL context.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered to enhance the rigor and refinement of future research. First, this research focused solely on quantitative methods. Future studies are encouraged to use qualitative research methods to gain deeper insights into learners' perception regarding their reading comprehension difficulties.

Second, while writing this research, particularly the literature review section, it proved challenging to locate relevant studies specifically addressing the reading abilities of first-semester EFL students in the English Department at the Faculty of Education in Benghazi, Libya. Most available literature has concentrated on reading difficulties among Libyan learners in secondary schools, preparatory programs, and primary education, with very few evaluations of EFL students' reading comprehension skills in Libyan universities or studies focused on the development of English reading skills among young Arab (Libyan) learners. Consequently, the studies included in this thesis might not provide a comprehensive overview of the cognitive abilities and instructional practices related to EFL reading comprehension for first-semester students in the English Department at the Faculty of Education.

Third, during the procedures of this research method, most participants struggled to understand the questionnaire items due to their low level of reading ability. This

necessitated the need to rephrase the items to ensure understanding without influencing their responses on the Likert scale. Also, during the pre-test phase, students asked for explanation of the question entry so that they can respond accordingly. They also requested translations and explanations for some words, indicating challenges with vocabulary comprehension.

Forth, the majority of participants in this research were female, suggesting that a significant proportion of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Libya are female. This observation highlighted the need for more male students to specialize in English and pursue careers as male English teachers. Only five participants involved in the study were male, while 55 were female (see *Chapter Three*). Consequently, the findings of this research cannot be generalized to both genders.

Despite these limitations, this present study aimed to contribute to the understanding of reading difficulties experienced by Libyan EFL students. By examining the relationship between various factors and reading difficulties, this research provided insights that could inform reading teaching practices and assist students in overcoming their difficulties in reading comprehension. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a foundation for further research in this crucial area, ultimately leading to the development of more effective instructional strategies and interventions to support EFL students in their language acquisition and academic success.

5.7 Recommendations

To enhance the reading comprehension abilities among Libyan EFL students and to reinforce the implementation of learner-centered teaching through the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* which has demonstrated effectiveness in improving reading strategies among EFL Libyan students, the researcher, in this section, presents a series of overlapping recommendations for learners, teachers, decision-makers, curriculum designer, and future research that aligned with her research findings. Additionally, the recommendations are informed by the researchers' own experiences in teaching and learning reading comprehension within the Libyan context.

Learners:

1. Learners must recognize that the overall deficiencies in their EFL reading skills are, in part, attributable to their efforts. It is their responsibility to enhance their reading proficiency. It is essential to understand that reading skills are most effectively

developed through personal practice and dedicated effort, rather than relying exclusively on the guidance of teachers.

2. Learners should prioritize the development of their reading skills, acknowledging its critical importance in achieving academic success (Nuttall, 1982). Proficient reading is foundational not only for understanding course materials but also for engaging with a wide array of texts across various disciplines. Proficiency in reading enables students to critically analyze information, synthesize ideas, and effectively communicate their thoughts. Furthermore, strong reading skills facilitate independent learning, allowing learners to explore topics beyond the classroom and deepen their knowledge base. By dedicating time and effort to enhance their reading abilities, learners position themselves for greater success in their educational pursuits and future endeavors.
3. Reading should be guided by specific purposes to enhance attentiveness and comprehension (Longan, 2002). Learners need to read with purpose in mind. They should understand that the primary purpose of reading is comprehension. Focusing on grasping the content and meaning of a text enables learners to gain knowledge and insights from the material.
4. Learners are highly advised to make a concerted effort to broaden their vocabulary as a means of enhancing their reading skills. vocabulary has a prime influence on reading skills (Alharbi, 2022). A rich vocabulary repertoire is fundamental to effective reading comprehension, as it enables individuals to understand and engage with a wider range of texts. When learners encounter new words, they not only expand their linguistic repertoire but also gain access to more nuanced ideas and concepts.
5. Reading for overall meaning is a crucial strategy that learners must recognize and embrace. When faced with unfamiliar words, it is important for learners not to become frustrated or overwhelmed. Instead, they should infer the meanings of these words based on the surrounding context. If certain unfamiliar terms are deemed insignificant, they can choose to disregard them, thereby preserving a coherent understanding of the text as a whole. By focusing on the overarching message rather than getting bogged down by individual words, learners can enhance their reading efficiency and effectiveness.
6. Learners are recommended to cultivate the strategy of discerning between important and unimportant details, as this ability is essential for enhancing reading

comprehension. A crucial component of effective reading comprehension is the capacity to differentiate between significant information and redundant details that do not impede understanding. By honing this strategy, learners can focus on the most relevant content, thereby improving their overall comprehension and retention of the material.

7. Learners are highly encouraged to identify word behavior within sentences, such as recognizing prefixes, suffixes, and changes in meaning or grammar. Developing this strategy can significantly enhance their understanding of the overall meaning conveyed in a sentence. By recognizing these linguistic elements, learners can more effectively grasp the contextual significance and nuances of the words used, ultimately leading to a more comprehensive comprehension of the sentence as a whole.

Teachers:

8. Theoretically, teachers are recommended to deeply understand the degree of their involvement in learner-centered reading lessons as described in the model presented in this study (see *Chapter Three*). They need to understand the basic concepts of a teacher provider, facilitator, and guide roles. This is important because greater teacher involvement can lead to a decrease in student participation in reading classes.
9. Practically, in classroom reality, teachers are strongly encouraged to demonstrate a commitment to the principles of learner-centeredness as outlined in the model presented in this study. By preparing lesson plans that align with this proposed model, teachers can ensure a rigorous application of learner-centered teaching methodologies. Effective planning of EFL lessons is essential (El Mezughi, 2021), as it encourages students to gradually take responsibility for their own learning.
10. Teachers bear a critical responsibility in selecting appropriate topics that are relevant to their student's needs and aligned with their linguistic abilities. Even when following an officially provided curriculum, teachers may choose to introduce certain topics in early lessons while postponing others based on their students' language proficiency levels. This flexibility allows teachers to tailor their instruction according to the specific requirements of their students.
11. Teachers are required to consistently remind students of the importance of taking responsibility for their learning; this is a crucial task for educators. Little (1996) stated that learners usually do not automatically take responsibility for their

learning and they need teachers to remind them in this regard. Consequently, by shifting their traditional roles to that of organizers, facilitators, and monitors, as described in the model developed in this study, teachers can help learners understand that it is their responsibility to take the initiative in their learning. This shift not only empowers students but also fosters a more engaged educational journey.

12. In the teacher-provided pre-reading stage outlined in the model of this study, it is crucial that teachers prepare students for successful comprehension of the text (Nuttall, (2005; Weber,1984). Preparing informative, aesthetic, and recreational questions at the outset of reading can capture students' interest and cultivate a love for reading.
13. Teachers need to integrate technological advancements in EFL classes (Zeat, 2022), as students had shown increased engagement when teachers incorporate videos, pictures, and websites for brainstorming activities (Alivi, 2022). This is particularly effective for activating students' background knowledge. Therefore, teachers are recommended to carefully select videos, images, and websites that are closely aligned with the upcoming reading material. By doing so, students can relate their experiences to what they will read, which greatly fosters a more meaningful learning experience.
14. Teachers are recommended to inform students that difficulties in reading may arise, but there are effective strategies available to overcome these difficulties. This may be more beneficial than solely focusing on teaching the meanings of specific words, phrases, and concepts (Bliock, 1992). By adopting this mindset, teachers can create a supportive and encouraging atmosphere that empowers students to take an active role in improving their reading strategies.
15. In classroom settings, teachers are recommended to cultivate purposeful reading by guiding students to understand why they are reading and what they aim to gain from it. They should guide students to uncover the significance of their reading and assist them in recognizing the embedded distinction between reading for main ideas and reading for details.
16. In facilitating students' understanding of the underlying meaning of a reading text, it is recommended that teachers consistently ask students *what*, *why*, and *how* questions relevant to the reading material (Andy, 2021). This would enable students to reach possible inferences and make suitable predictions, enhancing their

comprehension of the text. *What* questions encourage students to identify key information, such as main ideas, characters, or events. *Why* questions prompt students to analyze the reasons behind certain actions or statements, fostering critical thinking skills. *How* questions challenge students to explore the relationships between different elements of the text and make logical connections (Andy, 2021).

17. It is highly recommended that teachers assign students to groups of three or four at the beginning of the course, allowing them to automatically know their group affiliations for collaborative activities. This approach saves time, as it eliminates the need to reassign students to different groups in each lesson. Pairing students to foster communication is essential (Zraga, 2018). By establishing consistent group assignments, students can concentrate on participation rather than determining which group to join.
18. When workshops are announced, teachers are strongly advised to attend and should not seek excuses for their absence. These workshops provide valuable guidance on the effective implementation of learner-centered teaching. Additionally, teachers should meet periodically to discuss their teaching experiences and exchange thoughts and ideas that can benefit both educators and learners. This collaborative approach ensures equity in teacher performance across different learner groups. Specifically, when class sizes are minimized and the number of groups increases, a corresponding number of teachers will be needed. These teachers must adhere to the consistent instructional strategies agreed upon during the intensive workshops, thereby promoting a cohesive learning environment.

Curriculum Designers:

19. In implementing learner-centered teaching, the processes of curriculum and course designers at the university stage should be based on a survey of students' real language learning needs, while keeping in mind environmental and contextual factors.
20. When selecting materials, curriculum designers should take into account several factors, including the length of reading passages, paragraph complexity, language complexity, information density, subject matter, and overall content. Utilizing materials that are too complex or difficult for students' linguistic abilities can hinder the effectiveness of learner-centered teaching. This is because such materials place

an excessive burden on students to decipher unfamiliar words and texts, which can overwhelm them and lead to frustration.

21. It is essential for EFL learners to receive strategy training activities within Libyan curricula (Ghwela et al., 2017). Assigning reading activities that focus on practicing various reading strategies in learner-centered classrooms can enhance comprehension. Consistent exposure to diverse reading activities in the curriculum, with students positioned at the center of the learning process, ultimately helps them overcome their difficulties.
22. In designing reading activities, it is essential to consider the type of activity that aligns with each degree of learner-centeredness outlined in the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model*. This model emphasizes the importance of structuring activities into three distinct phases: tarter activities for the pre-reading stage, where students activate predictors and relate to their schemata for better understanding; main activities for the while-reading stage, where students interact with the text by activating their content schema to construct meaning and make educated inferences; and closing activities for the post-reading stage, where students become active reflectors, express their opinions, and summarize the material.
23. Effective time management is crucial in the design of reading activities. It is essential for curriculum designers to allocate approximate timeframes for the three stages of reading activities: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. This allocation should consider the diverse performance levels and abilities of students, ensuring that all learners have adequate time to engage with and complete each activity. By thoughtfully distributing time across these stages, curriculum designers can create a more inclusive learning environment that accommodates varying student levels and needs.
24. To increase the effectiveness of the curriculum, designers should adopt a learner-centered perspective in designing teacher guidebooks: Specifically, the roles of teachers should be clearly articulated across three key stages: the teacher-introduced pre-reading stage, the teacher-facilitated while-reading stage, and the teacher-monitored post-reading stage. Each of these stages should be described and presented in a step-by-step manner to ensure that teachers understand their responsibilities and can effectively support student-centered learning throughout the reading process.

25. Curriculum designers are advised to revise or update the curriculum on a semiannual or five-year basis to align with teachers' needs and their capacity to achieve objectives within the designated time frame (El Mezughi, 2021). This flexibility encourages teachers to take their time and exercise patience when implementing learner-centered teaching strategies in EFL classes in Libya. Knowing that there is room for adaptation allows teachers to provide feedback to curriculum designers, enabling them to accommodate and modify the curriculum according to the specific demands of teachers. Moreover, this alleviates the pressure on teachers regarding completing materials allocated for the course.

Decision Makers:

26. There is a need to increase the number of EFL classes, this adjustment would allow students to feel more focused and relaxed during English lessons (Orafi, 2008; Tomi, 2023). Limited time and number of lectures do not provide Libyan EFL students with adequate opportunities for preparation, practice, and integration (Asswail, 2020). Decision makers in English departments at Libyan public universities should assign multiple reading lectures per week (instead of one lecture per week), this is an effective way to build students' reading comprehension and fluency. Concentrating on reading helps Libyan EFL learners improve their reading difficulties, which will in turn enhance their overall learning of the English language.
27. There is a pressing need to decrease the number of EFL students per class, as large class sizes in Libyan schools significantly hinder effective teaching practices (Abushafa, 2014; Asswail, 2020; El Mezughi, 2012; Omar, 2020; Zraga, 2018). In this context, "class size" refers to the number of students for which one teacher is responsible (Mosteller, 1995). Large class sizes can adversely affect the level of cooperation and interaction among students, as well as their engagement with the teacher. This situation often leads to increased noise levels and instances of disruptive behavior, which can limit the types and number of activities that teachers can effectively implement within a given timeframe (Ehrenberg et al., 2001). Additionally, larger class sizes may hinder a teacher's ability to focus on and address the individual needs of each student. Therefore, the Libyan Ministry of Education should tackle the issue of overcrowded classrooms by providing new facilities that accommodate smaller class sizes. Such a change would enable

teachers to implement learner-centered instructional methods more effectively, fostering a more conducive learning environment for students.

28. To successfully implement learner-centered teaching instructions within the traditionally teacher-centered context of Libya (Abushina, 2017; Ahmed, 2013; Azzouz & Taleb, 2020; Mohsen, 2014; Omar, 2014; Omar, 2020), decision-makers should provide in-service and pre-service teachers with professional development programs, such as courses, workshops, or seminars focused on learner-centered instruction. These programs are essential for equipping educators with effective strategies to foster this teaching approach. Research indicates that professional development is one of the most effective means of improving teaching quality (Elramli, 2023; Hirsh, 2001). The Ministry of Education should ensure that all EFL teachers in Libya have access to appropriate training courses aimed at enhancing their understanding of learner-centered methodologies and improving their performance in both instruction and classroom management. These training programs must focus on equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate varying degrees of student-centeredness in their teaching practices.
29. The implementation of learner-centered teaching needs collaborative work and great efforts from all the parties involved in the educational context including inspectors. They should ensure the implementation of learner-centered teaching in reading classes; this necessitates that teachers exercise caution in its application. When inspectors evaluate teachers on their application of learner-centered principles throughout various reading stages, they not only highlight the importance of learner-centered teaching but also motivate teachers to enhance their efforts in its application. Therefore, the involvement of inspectors is crucial in ensuring the effective implementation of learner-centered teaching practices.
30. It is urgent for the Ministry of Education to ensure the availability of teaching resources in Libyan classrooms, as these resources are essential for the effectiveness, smoothness, and enrichment of teaching. They facilitate the introduction of topics and the illustration of unfamiliar vocabulary, thereby promoting a more learner-centered approach to instruction. Furthermore, teaching aids can save valuable lesson time that would otherwise be spent on manual demonstrations. The absence of essential teaching tools, such as data projectors, libraries, reliable internet connections, electricity, and electronic boards, will

significantly hinder the learning processes for both students and lecturers. This lack of resources poses considerable challenges to the development and implementation of updated teaching methods in Libya (Wheida, 2023; Zeat, 2022; Zraga, 2018).

31. Language course evaluation should be conducted as a continuous and dynamic process to ensure timely feedback. It is essential for decision-makers at Libyan universities to regularly evaluate courses to adapt to the evolving needs of students. Additionally, the appropriateness of the time allocated for each course must be consistently assessed to prevent teachers from feeling pressured to skip units due to time constraints.
32. Testing and examination techniques need to be revised so as to become consistent with the learner-centered teaching approach, especially in terms of goals, outcomes and contents. Thus, new specifications are needed to make testing items more effective for assessing key strategies that prioritize student engagement and understanding.

Future Research:

33. Due to the scope of the study, the present research accesses the reading difficulties among Libyan EFL learners using quantitative research methods. This study leaves gaps for other researchers to fill in through further qualitative investigations.
34. This study focused exclusively on EFL Libyan students. To enhance the external validity of the findings, it is essential to replicate the research in diverse settings that include students from various nationalities. A more comprehensive study will deepen our understanding of how this model affects reading comprehension across different pedagogical contexts, which necessitate distinct logistical approaches.
35. Additionally, conducting this research in varied contexts, such as English as a Second Language (ESL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), may uncover new insights into learner-centered teaching practices and their effectiveness.
36. In recent years, the utilization of online reading classes has gained significant popularity among language teachers and learners (Brandl, 2002), particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. Future studies may focus on examining the implementation of the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Reading Model* in EFL online reading classes, where both teachers and students engage in remote

- interactions. This exploration could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and dynamics of online learning environments in language education.
37. Future research could evaluate the effectiveness of the *Integral Three-Stage Learner-Centered Model* in blended learning environments. This learning combines face-to-face instruction in traditional classroom settings with online learning facilitated through various training media, including technology, activities, and diverse event types to enhance the achievement of course objectives (Belazi, & Ganapathy, 2021).
 38. Future researchers may also consider applying this model into integrated reading and writing EFL courses to evaluate its broader applicability.
 39. Future research on the effectiveness of this integral reading model is expected to incorporate additional methodologies, including the use of a checklist to systematically document the weekly progress of individual students in terms of their participation and preferred strategies. Furthermore, other scholars may seek to explore the disparities in the application of effective reading strategies between male and female English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of gender-related differences in reading difficulties.
 40. Another way to extend the findings of this study is to examine the effectiveness of this model in developing other receptive skills, particularly English listening. Given the importance of listening as a receptive skill in educational contexts, it would be valuable to conduct research using experimental or longitudinal designs that include an analysis of teachers' perspectives.
 41. One area for future research needed to investigate the alignment of the target curriculum with the proposed learner-centered instructional methods. By examining how the existing curriculum can be adapted or redesigned to facilitate the implementation of this instructional approach, researchers can identify potential barriers and opportunities for effective integration. This alignment is crucial, as it ensures that the curriculum not only supports learner-centered approaches but also meets the diverse needs of students.
 42. The present study examined the reading difficulties experienced by EFL Libyan students and the underlying reasons for these difficulties. Further intriguing issues with regard to this learner-centered reading model presented in this study include focusing on the perceptions of EFL teachers in Libya regarding the concept of

learner-centeredness, and the challenges that teachers encounter in effectively implementing this approach within EFL reading classes.

43. A comparison of learners' and teachers' perceptions of learner-centered implementation can cast further light on how it could unleash or handicap reading learning among EFL learners.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Questionnaire Information Sheet

Questionnaire Information Sheet

Dear participants,

You are kindly being invited to take part in a research project entitled: *Investigating Reading Comprehension among EFL Libyan Students: A Case Study of the First-Semester Students in the Department of English at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi*. You are kindly requested to take time to read the following information carefully and do not hesitate to ask any questions. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Hana'a M. Hadaga.

What will the study involve?

The study will involve a questionnaire that participants need to answer all questions involved. The questionnaire been chosen in this study is related to the reading strategies that learners are expected to use while reading an English text. The aim behind conducting this questionnaire is to find answers to the research question in this study: To what extend do the first-semester students in the English Department at the Faculty of Education at the University of Benghazi use reading strategies to overcome their reading difficulties. The type of questionnaire is a close-ended one which consists of questions with predefined response options, namely: never, sometimes, often, and always. It consists of 14 items that are related to reading strategies students are expected to implement while reading an English text.

How long will the questionnaire take?

It won't take much time! Probably it will take you ten minutes to tick the choice that best resembles the frequency of your reading strategy use.

Why have you been asked to take part?

You have been asked to participate in this since you are a student learning English and is involved in the field of learning English as a foreign language. Your participation will definitely be beneficial.

Do you have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary. And you have the option to withdraw if you do not wish to participate.

Confidentiality

I will ensure that no clues to your identity appear in the thesis. Your names will be entirely anonymous. All the information that I will collect about you during the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in the analysis of the study.

Any further queries?

In case you have any problem or you wish to seek further information, you can contact me.

Appreciate your participation,

Warm regards

Appendix B

The Questionnaire

Read the statements then choose your preferred choice from the Likert-Scale

N	Statement	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I use key words to search for main ideas.				
2	I skim or scan the text to search for the idea.				
3	While reading, I have a purpose in my mind and try to focus on what I read in the passage.				
4	I use my background knowledge whenever I read a text.				
5	I use prediction skills while I am reading a text.				
6	Focusing on important information in a text through skimming a whole text.				
7	I guess a meaning of a text through activating my background knowledge.				
8	I make a literal translation (English-English translation)				
9	I read in details to answer questions.				
10	I use context clues to understand the meaning of vocabulary.				
11	I guess from (prefixes, suffixes) and semantic knowledge (synonyms, antonyms) to understand unfamiliar vocabulary.				
12	I keep reading a text even I find difficult words in the text.				
13	I read questions prior to reading a text.				
14	When a text becomes difficult, I repeat reading text to increase my understanding even when I find it difficult.				

Appendix C


The Pre-Test

A Reading Test

Student's Name

Read the article, then answer all the questions below:

Work Today



THERE ARE many ways in which you can improve your job prospects. One of them is to take computer classes. Computers are used in more and more businesses, and most **job seekers** should be familiar with basic computer programs. Learning new computer skills can also help you change careers, and the number of people enrolling in computer classes is increasing.

Depending on the class they choose, students can learn basic or more advanced computer skills. Classes that teach the use of **spreadsheets** are popular, since spreadsheets are used in many businesses to show information in table form. For example, spreadsheets are very often used to show financial information. Photographers and artists may want to take classes in digital **graphic design**. People with these skills can help create illustrations for publishers or advertising agencies, or work in television. Classes in **web design**, which teach

how to create and maintain a company website, are becoming more and more popular.

While computer classes are a part of many university programmes, you don't have to be a student to take a computer class. Many universities offer continuing education classes that you can take in the evening. There are also an increasing number of online classes that you can take from home. The advantage of these classes is that you can study whenever you want. If you decide to take a class online, make sure you get information about the site that is offering the class. Some are excellent and can help you get a better job, but others are not very good. Finally, if you are very **self-disciplined**, and can work without a teacher, you can buy an app about computers and teach yourself, but explanations can sometimes be quite complex and need practical demonstration.

Q1. Match the words and phrases in bold in the article above with their definitions below. The words are: job seekers, spreadsheets, graphic design, web design, and self-disciplined.

1. Able to make yourself do things even when you don't want to do them
.....
2. A program that lets you arrange information in tables
3. A person who is looking for a job
4. Creating a website
5. Creating pictures for books, brochures, etc

Q2. Reread the article then give detailed answers to the following questions:

1. Give two reasons for improving computer skills?
.....
.....
2. Why are spreadsheets used a lot in businesses?
.....
.....
3. What sort of company would a graphic designer work for?
.....
.....
4. Why is it becoming easier to find courses in computer skills?
.....
.....
5. What are the three main ways of studying computer skills?
.....
.....

Q3. Reread the article above, then choose (a) or (b) to say which inference you can make from each paragraph:

Paragraph 2

- a. If you are a banker, you should learn to use spreadsheets.
- b. More and more teachers are learning to use spreadsheets.

Paragraph 2

- a. Web design is easy.

- b. More and more companies have websites.

Paragraph 3

- a. Students don't have to take computer classes.
- b. Many universities offer classes for people who work.

Paragraph 3

- a. Some online classes won't help you get a better job.
- b. Online classes are always well taught.

Paragraph 3

- a. Teaching yourself with an app is not easy.
- b. The best way to learn about computers is to buy an app.

Q4. Determine the meaning of the following words from the words' parts (suffixes and prefixes):

Photographers

explanations

unemployment

Q5. Reread the article, then choose its main ideas:

- a. ____ There are many types of computers nowadays.
- b. ____ Learning computer skills are vital in the improvement of one's career.
- c. ____ The cost of computer classes is very high for students to pay.
- d. ____ Students can choose to learn simple or complicated computer skills.
- e. ____ Computer skills can be self-studied skills in evening or online classes.

Appendix D

Key Answers of the Pre-Test

Q1 Key answers: 1. self-discipline 2. Spreadsheets 3. Job seeker 4. Web design 5. Graphic design.

Q2 Key answers:

1. To improve job prospects./To help find a new career.
2. Because they can show information in table form./Because they are good for showing financial information.
3. A publisher, advertising agency or TV station.
4. Because you can study whenever you want.
5. On a course, online or from an app.

Q3 Key Answers

Paragraph 2: a If you are a banker, you should learn to use spreadsheets.

Paragraph 2: b More and more companies have websites.

Paragraph 3: b Many universities offer classes for people who work.

Paragraph 3: a Some online classes won't help you get a better job.

Paragraph 3: a Teaching yourself with an app is not easy.

Q4: Key answers:

Photograph is an object, the suffix (er) gives it the meaning of a person.

Explain is a verb, the suffix (-tion) changes it into a noun.

Unemployment: means not employ , (-ment) makes it a noun.

Q5 key answers: a. f b. T c. F d. T e. T

Appendix E

Samples of Participants' Responses to the Pre-Test


7
30

P15

A Reading Comprehension Pre-test:
Q1. Read the article below and then answer the questions below:

Address www.itcareers.co.uk

Work Today



THERE ARE many ways in which you can improve your job prospects. One of them is to take computer classes. Computers are used in more and more businesses, and most **job seekers** should be familiar with basic computer programs. Learning new computer skills can also help you change careers, and the number of people enrolling in computer classes is increasing.

Depending on the class they choose, students can learn basic or more advanced computer skills. Classes that teach the use of **spreadsheets** are popular, since spreadsheets are used in many businesses to show information in table form. For example, spreadsheets are very often used to show financial information. Photographers and artists may want to take classes in digital **graphic design**. People with these skills can help create illustrations for publishers or advertising agencies, or work in television. Classes in **web design**, which teach

how to create and maintain a company website, are becoming more and more popular.

While computer classes are a part of many university programmes, you don't have to be a student to take a computer class. Many universities offer continuing education classes that you can take in the evening. There are also an increasing number of online classes that you can take from home. The advantage of these classes is that you can study whenever you want. If you decide to take a class online, make sure you get information about the site that is offering the class. Some are excellent and can help you get a better job, but others are not very good. Finally, if you are very **self-disciplined**, and can work without a teacher, you can buy an app about computers and teach yourself, but explanations can sometimes be quite complex and need practical demonstration.

Internet

A: Match the words and phrases in bold in the article above with their definitions below.

1. Able to make yourself do things even when you don't want to do them

~~job seekers~~

2. A program that lets you arrange information in tables

spread sheets

3. A person who is looking for a job

graphic design

4. Creating a website

web design

5. Creating pictures for books, brochures, etc

self-disciplined

2

B: Reread the article then give detailed answers to the following questions:

1. Give two reasons for improving computer skills?

I don't know

2. Why are spreadsheets used a lot in businesses?

//

3. What sort of company would a graphic designer work for?

//

4. Why is it becoming easier to find courses in computer skills?

//

5. What are the three main ways of studying computer skills?

D: Reread the article, then choose (a) or (b) to say which inference you can make from each paragraph:

Paragraph 2

~~a.~~ If you are a banker, you should learn to use spreadsheets.

b. More and more teachers are learning to use spreadsheets.

Paragraph 2

- a. Web design is easy.
- b. More and more companies have websites.

Paragraph 3

- a. Students don't have to take computer classes.
- b. Many universities offer classes for people who work.

Paragraph 3

- a. Some online classes won't help you get a better job.
- b. Online classes are always well taught.

Paragraph 3

- a. Teaching yourself with an app is not easy.
- b. The best way to learn about computers is to buy an app.

F: Determine the meaning of the following words from the words' parts (suffixes and prefixes):

Photographers I don't know X
explanations I X
unemployment X

G: Reread the article, then choose its main ideas:

- a. ~~X~~ There are many types of computers nowadays.
- b. ~~X~~ Learning computer skills are vital in the improvement of one's career.
- c. ~~X~~ The cost of computer classes is very high for students to pay.
- d. ~~X~~ Students can choose to learn simple or complicated computer skills.
- e. ~~X~~ Computer skills can be self-studied skills in evening or online classes.

Appendix F

The Post-Test

A reading Test

Students' Name:

Read the article, then answer all the questions below:

Finding a Work

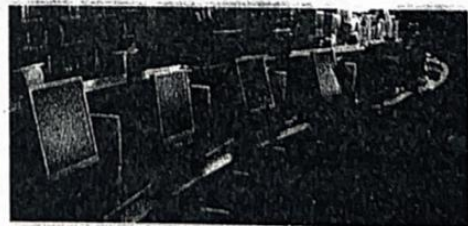
When I left school, I started working for a bank. I gave people information about their accounts and cashed cheques. I enjoyed it for a while, but then I decided it wasn't what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I had this idea that I would quite like a job which involved travelling. However, I didn't know what sorts of jobs there were or what I needed to study. So I started coming to the Central Library of Tripoli regularly to look for information that might help me. I was astounded by the help that is available to people like me.

The library has a range of information for people who are looking for the right career. Firstly, there's a whole section of books about different careers. They describe the various jobs and also tell you what skills or qualifications you need to do them. I've been taking a different book out each week. It's really interesting. A lot of the time we only think about the jobs that we often hear about, but there are so many unusual jobs around. And with new technology, new jobs are appearing all the time. There are also books with advice on how to find job vacancies and also how to prepare for and get through interviews. I've learnt a lot about how important **body language** is in an interview and also how to look businesslike. They explain how to write a good CV too, which is really important.

➤ If I need to learn new things or take extra qualifications, I can get information about classes at the library, too. They have some school and college catalogues, and there are computers where I can look for information about evening and summer classes. I hadn't realized there were so many different things I could study! Since I want to travel, I'm sure I'll need better language skills, so I definitely need to improve my English, and maybe learn another language, too. In addition to information about

the classes, the library also has a lot of its own materials to help me do this. It has books in English, and also lets you borrow DVDs with language-learning games and exercises. They have information about language tests, and practice books to help prepare for examinations if you need the qualifications.

— Another important section at the library is its daily selection of newspapers and magazines. I look through these to find job offers because it's good to know what jobs are available. I also look at interesting job sites on the Internet. The librarians have told me how to get information about companies. I can find out where they are, what they do and how big they are. This will be useful information when I decide to apply for a new job. I'm sure all this research will pay off and that one day I will have my dream job. And it will all be thanks to the library.



Q1. Match the words and phrases in bold in the article above with their definitions below. The words are: Astounded, body language, since, pay off, Qualifications.

1. How a person sits and moves.
2. From this period of time
3. Will bring the right results
4. Feeling greatly surprised by something
5. A special type of skill that makes someone suitable for a job

Q2. Reread the article then give detailed answers to the following questions:

1. Why did the writer want to change his job??
.....
.....
2. Why did the writer go to the Central Library of Tripoli?
.....
.....
3. The library also has its own materials to help people. List two of them.
.....
4. Why did the writer look through the daily section of books and magazines?
.....
5. What did the writer wish at the end of the article?
.....

Q3. Reread the article, then choose (a) or (b) to say which inference you can make from each paragraph:

Paragraph 1

- a. The writer wanted to change his job.
- b. The writer liked to work in a bank.

Paragraph 2

- a. Because of new technology, life is becoming more complicated and it is difficult to find a job.
- b. Because of new technology it is easier to find jobs.

Paragraph 2

- a. The writer is a good researcher.
- b. The writer is afraid of taking decisions.

Paragraph 3

- a. The writer was surprised that he should learn English.
- b. The writer was surprised that there were different things to learn.

Paragraph 3

- a. Newspapers and magazines tell where the companies are.
- b. Newspapers and magazines tell how to get extra qualifications.

Q4. Determine the meaning of the following words from the words' parts (suffixes and prefixes):

- Employment
- Information.....
- Disappearing

Q5. Reread the article, then choose its main ideas:

- a. ____ The writer reads newspapers to find out what is happening in the world.
- b. ____ The writer wants to get a new career.
- c. ____ The writer is doing research to change his job.
- d. ____ The Central Library is the best place to look for information about jobs.
- e. ____ The writer is learning how to conduct interviews

Appendix G

Key Answers of the Post-Test

Q1. Key answers: 1 body language 2. Since 3. Pay off 4. Astonished 5. qualifications

Q2. Key answers:

1. Because it wasn't the job that he wanted to do for the rest of his life.
2. To look for information that might help him.
3. Books in English and DVDs.
4. He looked through these to find job offers.
5. He wished that that one day he will find his dream job.

Q3. Key answers:

Paragraph 1: a

Paragraph 2: b

Paragraph 2: a

Paragraph 3: b

Paragraph 3: a

Q4. Employment : employ (verb) the suffix (-ment) changes it to a noun.

Information: inform (verb) the suffix (-tion) changes it to a noun.

Disappear: not appearing.

Q5. Key Answers: a F b T c T d T e F

Appendix H

Samples of Participants' Responses to the Post-test

A Reading Comprehension Post-Test:

Q1. Read the article below and then answer the questions below:

Finding a Work


When I left school, I started working for a bank. I gave people information about their accounts and cashed cheques. I enjoyed it for a while, but then I decided it wasn't what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I had this idea that I would quite like a job which involved travelling. However, I didn't know what sorts of jobs there were or what I needed to study. So I started coming to the Central Library of Tripoli regularly to look for information that might help me. I was astounded by the help that is available to people like me.

The library has a range of information for people who are looking for the right career. Firstly, there's a whole section of books about different careers. They describe the various jobs and also tell you what skills or qualifications you need to do them. I've been taking a different book out each week. It's really interesting. A lot of the time we only think about the jobs that we often hear about, but there are so many unusual jobs around. And with new technology, new jobs are appearing all the time. There are also books with advice on how to find job vacancies and also how to prepare for and get through interviews. I've learnt a lot about how important **body language** is in an interview and also how to look businesslike. They explain how to write a good CV too, which is really important.

➤ If I need to learn new things or take extra qualifications, I can get information about classes at the library, too. They have some school and college catalogues, and there are computers where I can look for information about evening and summer classes. I hadn't realized there were so many different things I could study! Since I want to travel, I'm sure I'll need better language skills, so I definitely need to improve my English, and maybe learn another language, too. In addition to information about

the classes, the library also has a lot of its own materials to help me do this. It has books in English, and also lets you borrow DVDs with language-learning games and exercises. They have information about language tests, and practice books to help prepare for examinations if you need the qualifications.

— Another important section at the library is its daily selection of newspapers and magazines. I look through these to find job offers because it's good to know what jobs are available. I also look at interesting job sites on the internet. The librarians have told me how to get information about companies. I can find out where they are, what they do and how big they are. This will be useful information when I decide to apply for a new job. I'm sure all this research will pay off and that one day I will have my dream job. And it will all be thanks to the library.



24
30

P. 24

A: Match the words and phrases in bold in the article above with their definitions below. The words are: Astounded, body language, since, pay off, Qualifications.

1. How a person sits and moves. body language ✓ (3)
2. From this period of time Astounded X
3. Will bring the right results pay off ✓
4. Feeling greatly surprised by something since X
5. A special type of skill that makes someone suitable for a job Qualifications ✓

B: Reread the article then give detailed answers to the following questions:

- 10
1. Why did the writer want to change his job?
I enjoyed it for a while, but then I decided it wasn't what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. ✓ 2
 2. Why did the writer go to the Central Library of Tripoli?
I started coming to the central library of Tripoli regularly to look for information that might help me. I was astounded by the help that is available to people like me. ✓
 3. The library also has its own materials to help people. List two of them.
It has books in English, and also lets you borrow DVDs with language-learning games and exercises. ✓
 4. Why did the writer look through the daily section of books and magazines?
I look through these to find job offers because it's good to know what jobs are available. ✓
 5. What did the writer wish at the end of the article?
This will be useful information when I decide to apply for a new job. I'm sure all this research will pay off and that my dream job. And it will all be the library. ✓

C: Reread the article, then choose (a) or (b) to say which inference you can make from each paragraph:

Paragraph 1

- a. The writer wanted to change his job. ✓
- b. The writer liked to work in a bank.

Paragraph 2

- a. Because of new technology, life is becoming more complicated and it is difficult to find a job.
- b. Because of new technology it is easier to find jobs.

Paragraph 2

- a. The writer is a good researcher.
- b. The writer is afraid of taking decisions.

Paragraph 3

- a. The writer was surprised that he should learn English.
- b. The writer was surprised that there were different things to learn.

Paragraph 3

- a. Newspapers and magazines tell where the companies are.
- b. Newspapers and magazines tell how to get extra qualifications. ?

D: Determine the meaning of the following words from the words' parts (suffixes and prefixes):

① Employment ... Suffixes ... ^{1/2} change ... the part of speech

Information ... Suffixes ... Verb ... ^{1/2} change ... the ^{1/2} part of speech

Disappearing ... Suffixes ... change the ... mean.

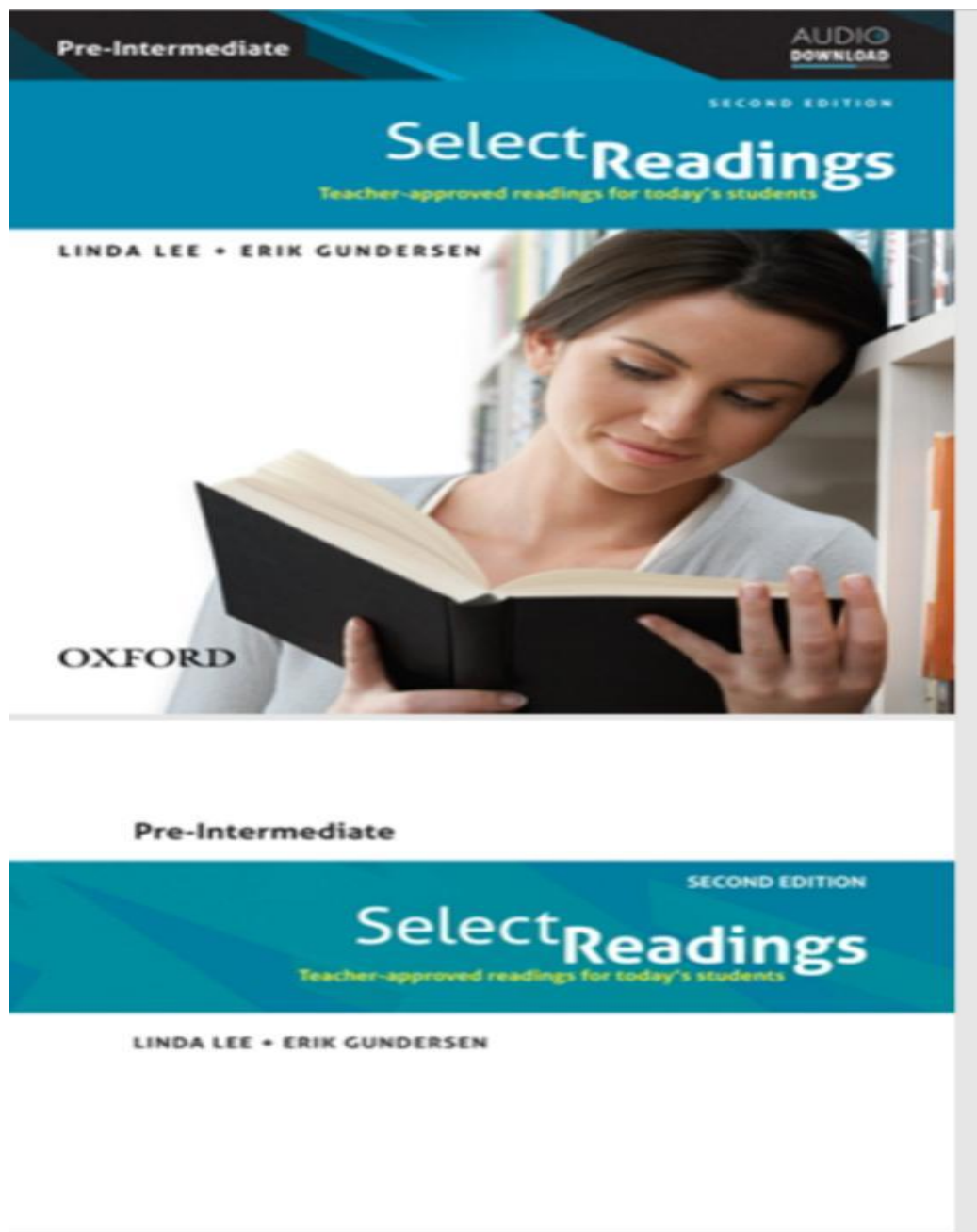
F: Reread the article, then choose its main ideas:

- a. ~~X~~ The writer reads newspapers to find out what is happening in the world.
- b. ~~X~~ The writer wants to get a new career.
- c. ~~X~~ The writer is doing research to change his job.
- d. ~~X~~ The Central Library is the best place to look for information about jobs.
- e. ~~X~~ The writer is learning how to conduct interviews.

Appendix I

Reading Materials

Reading materials employed in the research were adopted from *Select Readings*, Second Edition for Pre-Intermediate Level.



Contents

Scope and Sequence	vi
Series Overview	viii
Chapter 1 Are You Getting Enough Sleep?	1
“What happens if you don’t get enough sleep? Randy Gardner, a high school student in the United States, wanted to find out.”	
Chapter 2 Mika’s Homestay in London	11
“‘What do you want for your nineteenth birthday?’ my parents asked me. ‘A ring,’ I replied. However, instead of a ring, my parents gave me a one-month homestay in London.”	
Chapter 3 It’s Not Always Black and White.	21
“You can find the names of colors in a lot of English expressions. Many of these expressions, however, talk about colors in very different ways.”	
Chapter 4 Helping Others	31
“On the last day, all of us stood inside a room we had built in just a week, feeling a sense of fulfillment.”	
Chapter 5 Generation Z: Digital Natives	41
“Generation Z is connected to its music, videos, games, and friends online all day, every day.”	
Chapter 6 How to Be a Successful Businessperson	51
“Here’s a story about one successful businessperson. He started out washing dishes, and today he owns 168 restaurants.”	
Chapter 7 The Growth of Urban Farming	61
“The answer for more and more people is to grow their own food—even if they live in crowded cities.”	

Scope and Sequence

Chapter	Content	Reading Skill	Building Vocabulary
Chapter 1 Are You Getting Enough Sleep?	The importance of sleep	Previewing	Using collocations
Chapter 2 Mika's Homestay in London	Studying in an English-speaking country	Scanning for details	Learning compound words
Chapter 3 It's Not Always Black and White.	English expressions with color words	Skimming	Understanding idioms
Chapter 4 Helping Others	Volunteering	Identifying the topic and main idea	Using prefixes: <i>un-, im-, in-, ir-</i>
Chapter 5 Generation Z: Digital Natives	Everyday use of digital media	Finding supporting details	Learning collocations about technology
Chapter 6 How to Be a Successful Businessperson	Building a successful business	Making inferences	Learning word forms
Chapter 7 The Growth of Urban Farming	Growing food in large cities	Understanding the author's purpose	Understanding word roots

Series Overview with Teaching Suggestions

Select Readings, Second Edition is a reading course for students of English. In *Select Readings, Second Edition*, high-interest, authentic reading passages serve as springboards for reading skills development, vocabulary building, and thought-provoking discussions and writing.

The readings represent a wide range of genres (newspaper and magazine articles, personal essays, textbook chapters, book excerpts, and on-line discussions) gathered from well-respected sources, such as *The Wall Street Journal* and *National Geographic*, and approved by experienced teachers.

General Approach to Reading Instruction

The following principles have guided the development of *Select Readings, Second Edition*:

- **Exposing students to a variety of text types and genres helps them develop more effective reading skills.** Students learn to handle the richness and depth of writing styles they will encounter as they read more widely in English.
- **Readers become engaged with a selection when they are asked to respond personally to its theme.** While comprehension questions help students see if they have understood the information in a reading, discussion questions ask students to consider the issues raised by the passage.
- **Readers sharpen their reading, vocabulary-building, and language skills when skills work is tied directly to the content and language of each reading passage.** This book introduces students to reading skills such as skimming and scanning and vocabulary-building strategies such as learning synonyms and understanding phrasal verbs. Each skill was chosen in consultation with teachers to ensure that the most applicable and appropriate skills were selected for students at the Pre-Intermediate level.
- **Good readers make good writers.** Reading helps students develop writing skills, while writing experience helps students become better readers.
- **Background knowledge plays an important role in reading comprehension.** An important goal of *Select Readings, Second Edition* is to illustrate how thinking in advance about the topic of a reading prepares readers to better comprehend and interact with a text.

Chapter Overview

Each chapter in *Select Readings, Second Edition* includes the eight sections described below.

1. Opening Page

The purpose of this page is to draw readers into the theme and content of the chapter with relevant artwork and a compelling quotation.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Ask students to describe what they see in the photo(s) or artwork on the page and guess what the chapter is about. Have them read the quotation, restate it in their own words, and then say if they agree with it. Finally, ask what connection there might be between the image and the quotation.
- Call students' attention to the *Chapter Focus* box. Give them a chance to think about the content and skills they are about to study and to set their own learning goals for the chapter.

2. Before You Read

The first activity in each *Before You Read* section is designed to get students to connect personally to the topic of the chapter and to activate their background knowledge of the topic. A second activity or question in this section asks students to further explore their knowledge of the topic by completing a task with a partner. The third activity asks students to complete a *Previewing Chart*, which provides specific tasks for previewing a text. The purpose of this chart is to encourage students to make a habit of using simple previewing strategies before they read any text.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Make sure that students understand the purpose of the *Before You Read* activities. Explain that activating prior knowledge will help them to better comprehend the reading passage.

3. Reading Passage

In general, the readings become increasingly long and/or more complex as the chapters progress. To help students successfully tackle each passage, we have provided the following support tools:

Vocabulary glosses. Challenging words and expressions are glossed throughout the readings. In most cases, we have glossed chunks of words instead of individual vocabulary items. This approach helps students develop a better sense of how important context is to understanding the meaning of new words.

Culture and Language Notes. On pages 141–153, students will find explanations for cultural references and language usage that appear in blue type in the readings. Notes are provided on a wide range of topics from scientific information, to geographical references, to famous people.

Maps. Each location featured in a reading passage is clearly marked on one of the maps found on pages 154–157.

Numbered lines. For easy reference, every fifth line of each reading passage is numbered.

Recorded reading passages. Listening to someone reading a text aloud helps language learners see how words are grouped in meaningful chunks, thus aiding comprehension.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Encourage students to read actively. Circling words, writing questions in the margins, and taking notes are three ways in which students can make reading a more active and meaningful experience.
- Play the recorded version of the reading passage and ask students to listen to how the reader groups words together. As they listen to the recording, students can lightly underline or circle the groups of words.

4. After You Read: Understanding the Text

Following each reading, there are two to three post-reading activities that give students the chance to (a) clarify their understanding of the text, (b) practice reading skills previously introduced, and (c) discuss the issues raised in the reading. The first activity in this section is designed to give students practice with the types of comprehension questions used on exams such as **TOEFL®**, **TOEIC®**, and **IELTS™**. Questions are also labeled to highlight the reading skill required to answer the question.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Get students to discuss their reactions to the readings in pairs or groups. The process of discussing questions and answers gives students an opportunity to check their comprehension more critically.
- If time permits and you would like students to have additional writing practice, ask them to write a short essay or a journal entry on one of the questions in the *Consider the Issues* section.

5. Building Vocabulary

Reading extensively is an excellent way for students to increase their vocabulary base. Considering this, we pay careful attention to developing students' vocabulary-building skills in each chapter of *Select Readings, Second Edition*. A variety of vocabulary-building skills are introduced and recycled throughout the book. Each *Building Vocabulary* section starts out with a short explanation and examples of the skill in focus. In the activities that follow the explanation, students typically scan the reading to gather and analyze various types of words and then use the words in a new context.

Teaching Suggestions:

- View the explanation and examples at the beginning of each *Building Vocabulary* section before asking students to tackle the activities that follow. Encourage them to ask any questions they have about the explanations or examples.
- Encourage students to keep a vocabulary notebook. Present various ways in which students can organize the words in their notebook: by chapter, by topic, by part of speech, etc.

6. Reading Skill

At the beginning of each *Reading Skill* section, students encounter a short explanation of the skill in focus and, when appropriate, an example of how that skill relates to the reading in the chapter. The first task following this explanation asks students to return to the reading to think about and use the new reading skill. The **new Apply the Reading Skill** sections then give students the opportunity to apply the strategy to a *new short reading* that is related to the topic of the main reading passage.

Teaching Suggestions:

- Review the explanations and sample sentences at the beginning of each *Reading Skills* section before asking students to tackle the questions that follow. Encourage them to ask any questions they have about the explanations or examples.
- Reflect with students on the ways in which they can apply the reading skills they have learned in each chapter to other reading passages. Then have them apply the new reading skill as they work with the second reading passage in this section.

7. Discussion and Writing

At the end of each chapter, students have an opportunity to talk and write about a variety of issues. The activities in this section provide students with a chance to broaden their views on the topic of the reading and to address more global issues and concerns.

Teaching Suggestions:

- When time permits, let students discuss a question a second time with a different partner or group. This allows them to apply what they learned in their first discussion of the question.
- Choose one or more of the questions in this section as an essay topic for students.

8. Words to Remember

Each chapter ends with a list of *Words to Remember*. A majority of these words are Oxford 2000 keywords, and many are also highlighted on the Academic Word List. This section provides an efficient means for students to keep track of important new vocabulary by chapter. In addition, the **new Mini-Dictionary** on pages 158–164 features carefully crafted definitions of each *Word to Remember* from the new *Oxford Basic American Dictionary for learners of English*, giving students an alphabetical reference of the words and their definitions all in one place.

Additional Resources for Teachers of Reading

- *Teaching Second Language Reading* by Thom Hudson
- *Techniques and Resources in Teaching Reading* by Sandra Silberstein
- *Reading* by Catherine Wallace

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

Chapter

1



Chapter Focus

CONTENT

The importance of sleep

READING SKILL

Previewing

BUILDING VOCABULARY

Using collocations

“The amount of sleep required by the average person is five minutes more.”

—Wilson Mizner, American playwright and entrepreneur (1876–1933)

1

Before You Read

A. **Connect with the topic.** Check (✓) your answers to these questions about sleep.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. How many hours a night do you usually sleep? | <input type="checkbox"/> fewer than 6 hours |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> between 6 and 8 hours |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> more than 8 hours |
| 2. How do you feel when you wake up in the morning? | <input type="checkbox"/> great |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> okay |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> terrible |
| 3. How often do you feel sleepy during the day? | <input type="checkbox"/> often |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> sometimes |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> almost never |

B. **Pair work.** Compare answers to Activity A with a partner. Do you have the same sleep habits?

Example

A: I usually sleep fewer than eight hours a night.

B: Me too!

A: I want to sleep more, but I'm too busy.

C. **Preview the reading.** Move your eyes quickly over the reading on pages 3–4. Look at the reading for only 1–2 minutes. Then complete the Previewing Chart below.

Previewing Chart

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Title of the reading: _____ | |
| 2. Names of people and places in the reading. (List 2 more.) | 3. Key words. (What words appear several times? List 2 more.) |
| <i>Randy Gardner</i> _____ | <i>sleep</i> _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| 4. I think this reading is probably about | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

- 1 What happens if you don't get enough sleep? Randy Gardner, a **high school** student in the United States, wanted to find out. He designed an experiment¹ on the effects of sleeplessness² for a school science project. With Dr. William C. Dement from **Stanford University** and two friends
5 watching him carefully, Gardner stayed awake for 264 hours and 12 minutes. That's eleven days and nights without sleep!

- What effect did sleeplessness have on Gardner?
After 24 hours without sleep, Gardner started having trouble reading and watching television. The words and pictures were too blurry. By the third day, he was
10 having trouble doing things with his hands. By the fourth day, Gardner was hallucinating. For example, when he saw a street sign, he thought it was a person. He also imagined he was a famous **football** player.
15 Over the next few days, Gardner's speech³ became so slurred that people couldn't understand him. He also had trouble remembering things. By the eleventh day, Gardner couldn't pass a counting test.⁴ In the middle of the test he simply stopped counting. He couldn't
20 remember what he was doing.



- When Gardner finally went to bed, he slept for 14 hours and 45 minutes. The second night he slept for twelve hours, the third night he slept for ten and one-half hours, and by the fourth night, he had returned to his normal sleep schedule.
25 Even though Gardner recovered quickly, scientists believe that going without sleep can be dangerous. They say that people should not repeat Randy's experiment. Tests on white rats have shown how serious sleeplessness can be. After a few weeks without sleep, the rats started losing fur.⁵ And even though the rats ate more food than usual, they lost
30 weight. Eventually,⁶ the rats died.

Culture and
Language Notes
page 141

¹ **experiment** a scientific test
² **effects of sleeplessness** things that happen when you don't get enough sleep
³ **speech** way of talking
⁴ **a counting test** a test of saying numbers in order: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.
⁵ **fur** hair on an animal's body
⁶ **eventually** after some time

Has anyone stayed awake longer than Randy Gardner? Yes! According to **The Guinness Book of World Records**, Maureen Weston from the United Kingdom holds the record for staying awake the longest. She went 449 hours without sleep in 1977. That's 18 days and 17 hours!

- 35 During your lifetime, you will likely spend 25 years or more sleeping. But why? What is the purpose of sleep? Surprisingly, scientists don't know for sure.⁷ Scientists used to think we "turned our brains off" when we went to sleep. Sleep researchers now know, however, that our brains are very active when we sleep. Some scientists think we sleep in order to replenish⁸ brain cells. Other scientists think that sleep helps the body to grow and relieve stress.⁹ Whatever the reason, we know that it is important to get enough sleep.



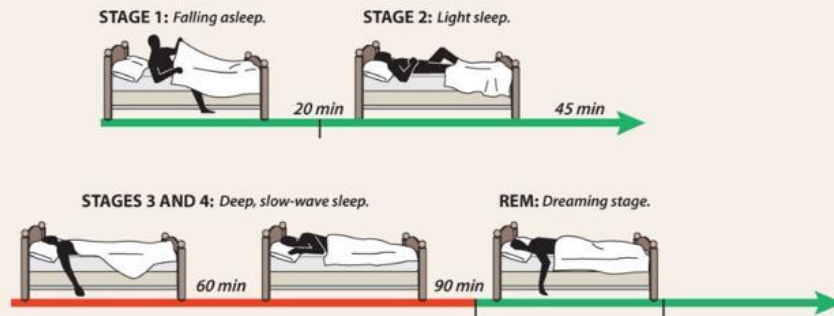
Word Count: 427

Reading Time: _____
(Minutes)

Words per Minute: _____
(Word Count/Reading Time)

About Sleep

Each night, we pass through¹⁰ five stages, or periods, of sleep. In Stage 1, we fall asleep. We sleep lightly in Stage 2. We have deep, or sound, sleep in Stages 3 and 4. Stage 5—REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep—is the most interesting stage. This is the time when we dream. These stages last about one and one-half hours. After each REM stage, we return to Stage 2 (light sleep) and begin the cycle again.



⁷ for sure definitely

⁸ replenish build new; renew

⁹ relieve stress remove or get rid of tense feelings

¹⁰ pass through experience

After You Read

Understanding the Text

A. Comprehension: Scanning for Details

Read each statement below and check (✓) True or False.

	True	False
1. Randy Gardner was a university student when he did his experiment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. During the experiment, Gardner slept for several hours every night.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. During the experiment, Gardner had trouble speaking clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. It took two weeks for Gardner to recover from the experiment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Going without sleep is not dangerous for white rats.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Maureen Weston stayed awake a little over seven and one-half days longer than Gardner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The author does not tell us how Gardner stayed awake for eleven days.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. According to this article, scientists are not sure why we need to sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Vocabulary

Underline these words in the reading passage on pages 3–4. Then match each word with its definition to the right.

1. ___ blurry	a. seeing things that aren't really there
2. ___ eventually	b. not sounding clear
3. ___ experiment	c. test done to prove something
4. ___ hallucinating	d. talking
5. ___ slurred	e. not looking clear
6. ___ speech	f. after a long time

C. Consider the Issues

Work with a partner to answer the questions below.

1. What are the effects of sleeplessness? List three more ideas from the reading passage.

Possible Effects Of Sleeplessness
• You might have trouble seeing clearly.
• You might _____

• You might _____

• You might _____

2. Think of three more possible effects of sleeplessness. Complete the sentences below.

a. You could _____.

b. You might _____.

c. _____.

Compare ideas with a partner.

Example

A: You might have trouble driving a car.

B: That's right. And you could have trouble ...

3. What is your opinion of Gardner's experiment? Check (✓) one or more statements or write your own.

I think it was a dangerous experiment.

I think it was an interesting experiment.

I don't think the experiment was very scientific.

_____.

Share your opinion with your partner.

Example

I think Randy Gardner's experiment was interesting because I learned a lot about the importance of sleep.

Building Vocabulary

Using Collocations

A *collocation* is a set—or chunk—of two or more words that are often used together. For example, it's natural for native speakers to say *sleep schedule*, but not *sleep timetable* or *sleep program*. Remembering collocations as chunks of words (*sleep + schedule*) makes it easy for you to recall and use them correctly.

We form collocations by combining different parts of speech. Below are some examples of collocations that include sleep:

Expressions	Verb + Adverb	Noun + Noun
go without sleep	sleep soundly	sleep schedule
get enough sleep	sleep well	
go / get to sleep		
fall asleep		

- A. Use the words in the box below to form collocations and complete the sentences.

enough fall schedule soundly to without

1. What time do you usually go _____ sleep?
2. What time did you go _____ sleep last night?
3. How long does it take you to _____ asleep?
4. How long can you go _____ sleep?
5. Do you usually get _____ sleep on weeknights?
6. Do you sleep _____ every night?
7. Do you have a regular or irregular sleep _____?
8. Do you have the same sleep _____ every day?

- B. **Pair work.** Ask a partner the questions in Activity A.

Example

A: What time do you usually go to sleep?

B: I usually go to sleep at 10:30.

Reading Skill

Previewing

Pre means *before*. *View* means *to look at*. Before you read something, it's important to look it over, or preview it. This will help you understand the reading better. When you preview a reading, you:

- 1) Identify the topic. To do this:
 - read the title.
 - look quickly over the reading for the names of people and places.
 - look quickly for key words (words that appear several times).
 - look at any pictures or charts.
- 2) Think about what you already know about the topic.
- 3) Ask yourself questions about the topic.

A. Analyze the Reading

Look at the title, the names of people, and the key words in the paragraph below. Then answer the questions.

REM (Rapid Eye Movement) Sleep

People _____ sleep _____
_____ REM (rapid eye movement) sleep _____
_____ REM sleep _____ researchers.
Researchers _____ REM sleep _____ brains _____ Adults
_____ REM sleep. Babies, _____
_____ sleep _____ REM. _____ researchers _____ REM sleep _____
babies' brains _____.

1. What do you know about the topic of the paragraph? Add one more idea to the list.
 - It gives information about sleep.
 - It probably gives some scientific information.
 - It may compare sleep in adults and babies.
 - _____.
2. What would you like to learn about this topic? Add two questions to the list.
 - What is REM sleep?
 - Is REM sleep necessary?
 - _____?
 - _____?

B. Apply the Reading Skill

Follow these instructions to preview the reading below.

1. Look only at the title of the reading. What do you think the topic of the reading might be? List one more possibility.
 - sleep problems around the world
 - why people don't sleep
 - _____
2. Look quickly over the reading. What names of people and places do you see? List two more.
 - adults
 - Hong Kongers
 - _____
 - Portuguese
 - Koreans
 - _____
3. What words are repeated several times (key words)? List two more.
 - world
 - _____
 - sleep
 - _____
4. What do you think the topic of the reading is now? Complete the sentence.
I think this reading is probably about _____.
5. What would you like to learn about this topic? Write two questions.

_____?

Sleepless Around the World

According to a survey conducted by ACNielsen, 37% of adults around the world don't get to bed until after midnight. The biggest night-owls in the world are the Portuguese, with 75% not getting to bed until after midnight. The second-ranked night-owls are the Taiwanese, with 69% going to bed after midnight. Following closely behind are the Koreans (68%) and Hong Kongers (66%).

Of the top ten night-owl places in the world, seven are in Asia. The other three are European countries known for late nights and mid-day siestas.

Top 10 Night-Owl Places in the World			
Location	Sleep between 12-1 a.m.	Sleep after 1 a.m.	Total after midnight
1. Portugal	47%	28%	75%
2. Taiwan	34%	35%	69%
3. Korea	43%	25%	68%
4. Hong Kong	35%	31%	66%
5. Spain	45%	20%	65%
6. Japan	34%	26%	60%
7. Singapore	27%	27%	54%
8. Malaysia	40%	14%	54%
9. Thailand	24%	19%	43%
10. Italy	29%	10%	39%

Mika's Homestay in London

Chapter

2

Chapter Focus

CONTENT

Studying in an English-speaking country

READING SKILL

Scanning for details

BUILDING VOCABULARY

Learning compound words



“We travel to learn.”

—Maria Mitchell, American astronomer (1818–1889)

Before You Read

A. Connect with the topic. Imagine you are going to study in another country. Check (✓) and write your answers to the questions below.

1. Have you ever studied in another country? Yes, I have.
 No, I haven't.
2. Would you like to study abroad? Yes, I would.
 No, I wouldn't.
3. What foreign country would you prefer to study in? Why? _____

B. Pair work. Take turns asking and answering the questions above.

Example

A: Have you ever studied in another country?

B: No, I haven't. What about you?

A: Yes, I have. I studied in Canada.

C. Preview the reading. Move your eyes quickly over the reading on pages 13–14. Look at the reading for only 1–2 minutes. Then complete the Previewing Chart below.

Previewing Chart

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Title of the reading: _____ | 3. Key words. (What words appear several times? List 2 more.) |
| 2. Names of people and places in the reading. (List 2 more.) | |
| <i>London</i> _____ | <i>parents</i> _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| 4. I think this reading is probably about | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |

Mika's Homestay¹ in London

by Mika Tanaka

¹ *Mika Tanaka, a college student from **Japan**, had a wonderful homestay in **London**. She lived with a British family and studied English for a month.*

"What do you want for your 19th birthday?" my parents asked me. "A ring," I replied. However, instead of a ring, my parents gave me a one-month homestay in London.

On February 11, I left Japan. On the plane, I worried about being all alone² there—a stranger to London. But when I met the Flannery family (my host family), their warm welcome³ made me feel at ease. Both my host father and mother were very kind and treated me like their own daughter.⁴

Maps
pages 154, 155

Culture and
Language Notes
page 142



¹ **homestay** period during which a visitor in a foreign country lives with a local family

² **all alone** by myself; without someone I know

³ **warm welcome** friendly greeting

⁴ **treated me like their own daughter** were kind and good to me, like I was their own daughter

Getting Ready to Go

Before going to London, I did some research on English schools in London and chose Oxford House College, mainly because it had reasonable fees. Also, there weren't many Japanese students at Oxford House.

I took my parents' advice and requested that my homestay family have both a mother and a father, be native-born, non-smoking, middle-class British people, and live near a subway station. I later found that this was very good advice, since some of my friends at the English school were having problems with their host families.

Living in London

Potatoes! It took me a little time to get used to the many kinds of potato dishes served: fried potatoes, steamed potatoes, sliced potatoes, and different-colored potatoes. My host mother was a good cook. She made delicious pasta and chicken dishes and even cooked rice for me.

Nadiege, a French girl, was another homestay student living with us, and we went around London together. On Saturdays, my host family would have a party at home with friends or family. When we returned from touring London, Nadiege and I would join the party. On Saturday evenings, Mr. and Mrs. Flannery would go to their favorite **pub**⁵ to spend time together.

Although I selected a school with few Japanese students, there were still at least two in each class. In class, I tried to speak a lot, but many Japanese students didn't use their English very much (even if they had large vocabularies), and spoke only Japanese with their friends.

Sometimes, I asked other people their impressions of Japan. "Japanese people work too hard," said my French friend. My teacher thought that Japanese people were very rich. I did not agree with these points,⁶ but I was interested in knowing what foreign people thought. One month in London made me realize that speaking English was very important because it is the language that people from many countries use the most. I would like to be more open-minded about people from different countries, like my host family is.



Word Count: 449

Reading Time: _____
(Minutes)

Words per Minute: _____
(Word Count/Reading Time)

⁵ **pub** place where people drink and sometimes eat, especially in Britain

⁶ **points** ideas

After You Read

Understanding the Text

A. Comprehension: Scanning for Details

Read the statements and check (✓) True or False.

	True	False
1. For her 19th birthday, Mika asked for a homestay in London.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Mika went to England alone.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Mika lived with a host family for two months.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Mika decided to study at Oxford House College because it wasn't expensive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Mika did things in London with the Flannerys' youngest daughter.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Mika's teacher thought all Japanese people were rich.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Vocabulary

What is the meaning of each highlighted word in the passage? Circle your answers below.

Before going to London, I did some research on English schools in London and chose Oxford House College, mainly because it had **reasonable** fees...

I took my parents' advice and **requested** that my homestay family have both a mother and a father, be **native-born**, non-smoking, **middle-class** British people, and live near a subway station. I later **found** that this was very good advice, since some of my friends at the English school were having problems with their host families.

1. The word "reasonable" in the passage is closest in meaning to (expensive / not expensive).
2. The word "requested" in the passage is closest in meaning to (asked for / refused).
3. The word "native-born" in the passage is closest in meaning to (born in Britain / born outside Britain).
4. The word "middle-class" in the passage is closest in meaning to (over 50 years old / not rich or poor).
5. The word "found" in the passage is closest in meaning to (heard / realized).

C. Consider the Issues

Work with a partner to answer the questions below.

1. Do you think Mika Tanaka would agree or disagree with the opinions below? Check (✓) Agree or Disagree under “Mika.”

Opinions	Mika		Me	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
a. You should do some research before you travel abroad.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. It's good to live with a host family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Traveling abroad is a good way to learn English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you agree with Mika's opinions? Check (✓) Agree or Disagree under “Me.”

2. Mika made several important decisions before she went to London. For each decision, list an advantage and a disadvantage.

Example

Mika's decision: She decided to live with a family that had both a mother and father.

Advantage: She would experience living with at least two British people.

Disadvantage: She would not experience a family setting different from her own in Japan.

- a. Mika's decision: She decided to go to a school with few Japanese students.

Advantage: _____

Disadvantage: _____

- b. Mika's decision: She decided to go to London alone.

Advantage: _____

Disadvantage: _____

- c. Mika's decision: She decided to live with native-born British people.

Advantage: _____

Disadvantage: _____

Building Vocabulary

Learning Compound Words

Sometimes in English, two or three words are joined together to make a new word. These compound words are usually nouns or adjectives. Some are written as one word. Some are written with a hyphen (-) between them. Some are written as two separate words.

Compound words as one word	Compound words with a hyphen	Compound words as two words
birthday homestay	open-minded native-born	host family high school

A. Complete the sentences with these compound words.

keyboard airport sister-in-law 19-year-old post office

1. My host father took me to the _____ so I could buy some stamps and send postcards to my friends back home.
2. My brother and _____ are hosting two students from Thailand in their home this summer.
3. When I did my homestay in France, I had a hard time using the computer _____. Some of the letters are in different places than on my American one.
4. When I arrived in Osaka for my homestay, my host family was at the _____ to welcome me.
5. Paulo was happy because his host family had a _____ son, like him.

B. Write sentences about yourself using the compound words below.

1. (birthday)

2. (open-minded)

3. (high school)

4. (choose your own)

Reading Skill

Scanning for Details

When you need to find *specific information* in a text, like the name of a person or a place, or a keyword that is important to the story, you don't have to read every word. Instead, you can *move your eyes quickly over the text* to find the information. This is called *scanning*.

A. Analyze the Reading

Look at the questions below. Then scan (don't read) the passage and find the answers.

1. What date did Mika leave for her homestay?

2. What was the name of Mika's homestay family?

3. What was the name of the other student who lived with Mika's host family?

4. Where did Mika study?

5. How many other Japanese students were in Mika's classes?

On February 11, I left Japan. On the plane, I worried about being all alone there—a stranger to London. But when I met the Flannery family (my host family), their warm welcome made me feel at ease...

Before going to London, I did some research on English schools in London and chose Oxford House College, mainly because it had reasonable fees. Also, there weren't many Japanese students at Oxford House...

Nadiege, a French girl, was another homestay student living with us, and we went around London together. On Saturdays, my host family would have a party at home with friends or family. When we returned from touring London, Nadiege and I would join the party. On Saturday evenings, Mr. and Mrs. Flannery would go to their favorite pub to spend time together.

Although I selected a school with few Japanese students, there were still at least two in each class. In class, I tried to speak a lot, but many Japanese students didn't use their English very much (even if they had large vocabularies), and spoke only Japanese with their friends.

B. Apply the Reading Skill

Look at the topics below. Scan the passage and fill in information for each topic. If there is no information about a topic, write *no information*.



Home News Business Sports Entertainment Health Blog A&E/Living

My Homestay in France

by Amy Miller

Last summer, I went to France for a two-month homestay. I left Boston and arrived in Paris on June 15. I met my host family at the airport. My host parents were Marc and Gabrielle Lapierre. They also had a daughter, Sophie, who was 14 years old.

The Lapierras lived in an apartment in Paris. It was very close to a subway station, so it was easy for me to travel around the city. I visited all the famous sites in Paris. I study art history, so the museums were my favorite places. Every evening I practiced speaking French with my host family, and I also helped Sophie practice her English.

The food in Paris was amazing. I tried a lot of different dishes, but the crepes were my favorite. You can buy crepes almost anywhere in the city. My favorite ones had tomatoes and cheese inside, or chocolate. Gabrielle taught me how to make crepes, and now I make them at home.

I was sad when I left Paris on August 12, but I'll never forget my wonderful time there. Marc and Gabrielle told me that they want to send Sophie for a homestay with my family and me in a few years. I can't wait!

1. Dates _____
2. Cities _____
3. Countries _____
4. People _____
5. Schools _____
6. Languages _____
7. Food _____
8. Sports _____

Discussion & Writing

1. If you went on a homestay, what would your ideal host parents be like? Check (✓) your answers below. Then add two more ideas.

My ideal host parents would ...

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> be native-born | <input type="checkbox"/> have children my age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be rich | <input type="checkbox"/> be non-smokers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be good cooks | <input type="checkbox"/> like to have parties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be able to speak my language | <input type="checkbox"/> treat me like their son or daughter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not be able to speak my language | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> live in a big home | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

2. Write 4–5 sentences about your ideal host parents. Then read your sentences to a classmate.

Example

My ideal host parents would be friendly. They would also live near a subway station and have a daughter my age. They would ...

3. **Pair work.** What are some good reasons for studying abroad? Think of a way to complete each sentence below. Then compare your ideas with another pair's ideas.

Example

It's a good idea to study abroad because you can learn to cook different kinds of food.

It's a good idea to study abroad because...

you can learn to _____.

you can learn about _____.

you can meet _____.

you can try _____.

Words to Remember

NOUNS

advice
impression

VERBS

do (research)
find
(get) used (to)
realize
request
select
treat (someone like)
worry (about)

ADJECTIVES

alone
delicious
native
reasonable

Mini-Dictionary
page 158

It's Not Always Black and White.

Chapter

3



Chapter Focus

CONTENT

English expressions with color words

READING SKILL

Skimming

BUILDING VOCABULARY

Understanding idioms

“The color of truth is gray.”

—André Gide, French author (1869–1951)

21

Before You Read

- A. Connect with the topic.** How do different colors make you feel? Write adjectives next to the colors. Use the adjectives in the box or your own ideas.

angry excited calm happy sad nervous

Colors	Adjectives
red	
blue	
green	
yellow	
black	

- B. Pair work.** Compare your answers with a partner.

Example

A: Red makes me feel excited because...

B: That's interesting. Red makes me feel angry...

- C. Preview the reading.** Move your eyes quickly over the reading on pages 23–24. Look at the reading for only 1–2 minutes. Then complete the Previewing Chart below.

Previewing Chart

1. Title of the reading: _____

2. Key words. (What words appear several times? List 5 more.)

red _____

3. I think this article is probably about

It's Not Always Black and White.

1 You can find the names of colors in a lot of English expressions. Many of these expressions, however, talk about colors in very different ways. For example, the expression *black and white* can have different meanings. If something is black and white, it means it is clear, easy to understand.

5 However, some people *see everything in black and white*, which means that they judge everything they see as either good or bad. Some people *have to see something in black and white* to know that it is true; this black and white talks about seeing something printed, as in a newspaper. If something is printed in a newspaper, it must be true, right?

10 The color red is often used to talk about things that are hot or exciting. You can listen to *red-hot jazz music* or eat red-hot chili peppers. If you *roll out the red carpet* for someone, you are giving them a big welcome. On TV, you may see stars walking on the red carpet at the opening night¹ of a Hollywood movie or at the **Academy**

15 **Awards**. After a big night like this, the stars often *paint the town red*, which means that they celebrate and have fun, going to parties or nightclubs all over town. However, red isn't always fun.

If you do something embarrassing, like *spill*² coffee on your teacher's desk, perhaps your face is *beet*³-red. Your teacher's face might be *red with anger*,⁴ too! Or if you see a person doing something bad on purpose,⁵ like taking someone's wallet, you can say that you caught the person *red-handed*. Whether it's good or bad, red usually means something interesting is happening.

Blue is different. When people *are blue*, or *have got the blues*, it means they feel sad. They might listen to **blues music**, which usually tells sad stories. Blue isn't always a sad color, though. If something good happens to you when you're not expecting it, like when you get a good idea, or if you *run into*⁶ an old friend, you can say it happened *out of the blue*.



Culture and
Language Notes
page 143

¹ **opening night** the first night a new movie is shown
² **spill** drop something, usually liquid, by accident
³ **beet** a small, round root vegetable that is often red
⁴ **with anger** angry, mad, or upset
⁵ **on purpose** intentionally, not by accident
⁶ **run into** suddenly meet

Green is another color that can have very different meanings. In the past, being green was almost always something negative. For example, if you ride on a boat and feel seasick,⁷ your face may *look green*. If someone
35 has something nice that you really want, like a new car or an expensive watch, you may also be *green with envy*.⁸ Or if you are starting a new job, your boss may say you *are green*, which means that you don't have any experience.

Now, however, green is usually good. *Being green* more often means
40 doing good things for the environment.⁹ People who are good at growing plants have a *green thumb*. Many companies are *going green*, which means they are recycling¹⁰ more or are trying to use less energy. In fact, some companies are moving to new, *green buildings*, which may use solar
45 power¹¹ or grow plants on their roofs. So if someone asks you how green you are, it probably means they want to know if you do good things for the environment.

Learning new expressions with colors can be fun, but it's not always easy. As you can see, their meanings can sometimes be very different. Try
50 looking for these expressions in the things you read. If you learn more about how these expressions are used, you may *add a little color* to your writing, or even pass your next English test *with flying colors*.¹²



Word Count: 588

Reading Time: _____
(Minutes)

Words per Minute: _____
(Word Count/Reading Time)

⁷ **seasick** feeling sick to your stomach while riding in a boat

⁸ **with envy** envious; wanting something that someone else has

⁹ **environment** everything around you; it usually means the air, water, and land; the earth

¹⁰ **recycling** using things again, like metal, glass, or paper

¹¹ **solar power** energy from the sun

¹² **pass...with flying colors** do very well, be successful

After You Read

Understanding the Text

A. Comprehension

For each item below, fill in the correct circle.

- 1. Finding the Main Idea** This reading is primarily about ____.
 Ⓐ learning the names of colors
 Ⓑ how people feel when they see colors
 Ⓒ English expressions with colors in them
- 2. Scanning for Details** According to the reading, if your face is red, it can mean you are ____.
 Ⓐ angry or embarrassed
 Ⓑ angry or happy
 Ⓒ happy or embarrassed
- 3. Scanning for Details** The following colors are mentioned in the reading: ____.
 Ⓐ black, white, red, purple, blue
 Ⓑ black, red, blue, green, yellow
 Ⓒ black, white, red, blue, green
- 4. Scanning for Details** Being green ____.
 Ⓐ is always good
 Ⓑ is always bad
 Ⓒ can be good or bad
- 5. Scanning for Details** In this article, the author shows that ____.
 Ⓐ the expression “black and white” always has a bad meaning
 Ⓑ being blue means feeling sad
 Ⓒ learning color expressions is necessary for taking tests

B. Vocabulary

Underline these words in the reading passage on pages 23–24. Then complete the sentences.

embarrassing energy expecting experience judge

1. It was so _____ when Haluk walked into the glass door.
2. Sheila is _____ an important phone call this afternoon from her boss.
3. That man in the jeans and T-shirt is the president of the company. You really can't _____ a person by what he's wearing.

4. Dennis has six years of _____ working as a nurse in this hospital.
5. We have to try to get the _____ we need from things other than oil.

C. Consider the Issues

Work with a partner to answer the questions below.

1. Read the situations. Which color expression from the reading completes each sentence?
 - a. Peter didn't get the job. The manager told him that he was too _____ and they want someone with more experience.
 - b. I just got my first paycheck from my new job! Let's go out and _____.
 - c. Roberta seems really _____ ever since she and her boyfriend broke up. I wish I could make her feel better.
 - d. Is everything okay? I saw you in the office talking to Mark, and your face was _____. What did he do?
 - e. I really liked riding the rollercoaster, but when we were done, Mike looked _____. Poor guy.

Which words in the sentences helped you guess the right answers?

2. Take turns asking and answering these questions with a partner.
 - Do you ever paint the town red?
 - Do you like to eat red-hot chili peppers?
 - Has your face ever been beet-red after doing something embarrassing?
 - What kinds of things make your face red with anger?
 - Does riding on a boat make you look green?
 - Do you have a green thumb?
 - Do you know any companies that are going green?

3. Look at your answers for Activity A on page 22. Think about how each color makes you feel. Then choose three expressions using colors and write a sentence using each one.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Building Vocabulary

Understanding Idioms

There are a lot of idiomatic expressions, or idioms, in English. Idioms are expressions whose meaning cannot be easily guessed just from the words in the idiom itself. The reading on pages 23–24 contains several idiomatic expressions using the names of colors.

Examples

- see everything in black and white (judge people or situations too quickly)
- out of the blue (suddenly)
- going green (trying to do good things for the environment)

- A. What do you think the expressions below mean? Read each sentence and match the idiom with the correct meaning. Underline the words that helped you guess the meaning.
1. Carl's business was doing really well, but he lost some big customers and now he's **in the red**.
 - losing more money than he's making
 - making more money than he needs
 2. After the car accident, Sarah's nose was **black and blue** for days.
 - had too much makeup
 - was dark and bruised from being hit
 3. I thought Max was a nice guy, but yesterday he really **showed his true colors**. He yelled at Eric for making a really little mistake.
 - showed what he's really like
 - showed that he likes to get angry
 4. The manager gave us **the green light** for our new project. I can't wait to get started.
 - permission to move forward
 - a lot of money
- B. Do you know these idioms? Work with a partner to guess the meanings.
- blue-collar job / white-collar job
 - tell a white lie
 - once in a blue moon
 - raise a red flag

Reading Skill

Skimming

When you *skim* a reading selection, you *read it quickly* to learn about its content and organization. You don't read every word. Instead, your eyes move very quickly over the selection, trying to find general information.

For example, look at the reading on pages 23–24 again. Read very quickly. How many colors does the reading talk about? You don't have to read every word to see the words *black and white*, *red*, *blue*, and *green*.

A. Analyze the Reading

Take just one minute to skim the Scope and Sequence on pages vi–vii. Then answer the questions.

1. Which chapter(s) might have a reading about technology?

2. Which chapter(s) might be about a famous person?

3. Which chapter(s) might be about student life?

4. Which chapter(s) might be about business?

5. Which chapter(s) might be about travel?

6. Which chapter(s) might be about health?

Compare your answers with a partner. Which words in the Scope and Sequence helped you find your answers? Write them below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

B. Apply the Reading Skill

First, read the questions below. Then take one minute to skim the article for the answers. Discuss your answers with a partner.

Showing Your True Colors

What does your favorite color say about the kind of person you are? Some people think that you can understand a lot about a person by his or her favorite color.

A person who likes red is usually strong and healthy. Red people like to see the good things in other people and don't like to feel sad. They like to try new things and don't like to stay home all day.

For a really fun time, talk to a person who likes orange. They like to be around friends all the time and love parties. Orange people are strong, and they like a lot of drama in their lives. Green people like to be around people, too, but sometimes they are too nice, which is not always good.

People who like blue are also very loving people. They are calm and strong, and they like other people to see this. They are very different from those who like purple. Purple people are funny, loud, and usually like art. They are happy to be different from others.

So, does your favorite color describe you? Try asking your friends and see if their color matches their personality. Have fun!

1. What is the topic of the reading selection?

- A English expressions with colors
- B favorite colors and personality
- C feelings and emotions

2. Which words helped you find the answer to question 1?

3. Where would you probably see this kind of reading?

- A in an advertisement, to sell you something
- B in a textbook, for scientific information
- C in a magazine, for fun

4. Which words helped you find the answer to question 3?

Discussion & Writing

1. In the reading, you learned several expressions using color. Which expressions have a positive meaning? Which are negative? Check (✓) your answers.

Expressions	Positive	Negative
1. Do you judge each situation individually, or do you see everything in black and white?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you roll out the red carpet when people visit your home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. What do you do when you feel blue?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you ever felt green with envy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Thinking about the environment, how green are you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tell a partner why you chose positive or negative for each item above.

2. **Pair work.** Take turns asking and answering the questions in the chart above. Give examples or reasons for each answer. Write your partner's answers.

My Partner's Answers

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

Question 4:

Question 5:

Share what you learned about your partner with other classmates.

Mini-Dictionary |
page 158

Words to Remember		
NOUNS	VERBS	ADJECTIVES
energy	expect	embarrassing
experience	judge	negative
expression	pass (a test)	
meaning	recycle	
wallet	run into	
	spill	

Helping Others

Chapter

4

Chapter Focus

CONTENT

Volunteering

READING SKILL

Identifying the topic and main idea

BUILDING VOCABULARY

Using prefixes: *un-*, *im-*, *in-*, *ir-*



“When one helps another, both gain in strength.”

—South American proverb

Before You Read

A. **Connect with the topic.** Read these dictionary definitions and answer the questions below.

vol-un-teen AWL /ˌvɒlənˈtiːr/ *noun* a person who says that they will do a job without being forced or without being paid: *They're asking for volunteers to help at the children's hospital.*

vol-un-teen AWL /ˌvɒlənˈtiːr/ *verb* to say that you will do a job without being forced or without being paid: *I volunteered to do the dishes.*

from the Oxford Basic American Dictionary for learners of English

1. Think of something you volunteered to do for a friend, family member, or organization. Who did you help? What did you do?
2. What volunteer organizations do you know? What do they do? Fill in the chart below.

Name of Volunteer Organization	Purpose
<i>Doctors Without Borders</i>	<i>sends medical staff to help people</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

B. **Pair work.** Discuss your answers to Exercise A with a partner.

C. **Preview the reading.** Move your eyes quickly over the reading on pages 33–34. Look at the reading for only 1–2 minutes. Then complete the Previewing Chart below.

Previewing Chart	
1. Title of the reading: _____	
2. Names of people and places in the reading. (List 2 more.)	3. Key words. (What words appear several times? List 2 more.)
<i>Nishinomiya, Japan</i>	<i>build</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
4. I think this reading is probably about _____	

Helping Others

by Mariko Asano

- 1 *Habitat for Humanity International—or Habitat—is a nonprofit organization that helps people in need¹ build houses. Since 1976, volunteers for Habitat have served more than 600,000 families worldwide. According to Habitat, however, there are still more than 1.6 billion people in the world*
- 5 *without decent housing.² In the article below, Mariko Asano talks about her experience as a Habitat volunteer. She has traveled to the Philippines three times to help build houses for people who need them.*



- I am 24 years old, and I grew up in **Nishinomiya, Japan**. Several years ago, I went to **Negros Island** in the **Philippines** as a Habitat volunteer.
- 10 This was the first of three trips I have taken to the Philippines as a volunteer. For me, the idea of building somebody's house abroad was very exciting. The next year I returned to Negros Island as a Habitat volunteer. This time I went as a student leader with 28 classmates from Kyoto University of Foreign Studies.

 Map page 155

Culture and
Language Notes
page 144

¹ **in need** needing help

² **decent housing** housing of an acceptable standard; livable housing

15 Both the staff and the families on Negros Island became dear friends of the work team I led.³ Meeting these people was wonderful for each of us. Their lifestyle reminded us of the meaning and value of life. The people also helped us appreciate the more valuable things in life, such as spending time with your family, friends, and neighbors; developing close
20 relationships; helping each other; and appreciating what you do have. These things are sometimes forgotten in an affluent⁴ country like Japan.

We thought we came to the Philippines to help the Filipino people, but they helped us to see something valuable. They generously offered their food, space, and hearts⁵ in a way we were unaccustomed to. (Would you
25 give up your bed for a stranger and sleep on the uncomfortable cement floor at your own house?)

When I took my third trip to the Philippines as a Habitat volunteer, I was assigned to⁶ a house with young people from around the world. In my group, there were Filipinos, Americans, Indians, Koreans, and Japanese.
30 We worked together to complete a house for a family we met on the site.⁷ On the last day, all of us stood inside a room we had built in just a week, feeling a sense of fulfillment.⁸ Even now we keep in touch across the world. Some of us are actively involved in Habitat in different countries.

Habitat brings people together and helps us realize that people all
35 over the world care about each other. Habitat sends the very important message that we can all be friends. Being involved with Habitat for Humanity has changed my life. I've learned that I can make a difference⁹ in the world.



Word Count: 443

Reading Time: _____
(Minutes)

Words per Minute: _____
(Word Count/Reading Time)

3 **the work team I led** the group of workers I was responsible for

4 **affluent** wealthy

5 **offered their food, space, and hearts** gave us food, a place to stay, and kindness

6 **assigned to** was sent to work in; was given a job in

7 **on the site** at the place (where they built the house)

8 **sense of fulfillment** feeling of accomplishment

9 **make a difference** do something important

After You Read

Understanding the Text

A. Comprehension

For each item below, fill in the correct circle.

- 1. Finding the Main Idea** This reading is about ____.
 A a woman's experience traveling to the Philippines
 B giving money to people for housing
 C how helping people can change your life
- 2. Scanning for Details** Which statement is true?
 A Habitat for Humanity is more than 30 years old.
 B The writer is an employee of Habitat for Humanity.
 C The writer has helped to build houses in more than one country.
- 3. Scanning for Details** How many classmates went with Mariko on her second trip?
 A 24
 B 28
 C 35
- 4. Scanning for Details** Mariko Asano went to Negros Island with students from ____.
 A Kyoto University of Foreign Studies
 B Nishinomiya, Japan
 C the Philippines
- 5. Scanning for Details** On her second trip, Mariko ____.
 A slept on the floor of someone's house
 B slept in a bed in someone's house
 C stayed in a small comfortable hotel

B. Vocabulary

Underline these words in the reading passage on pages 33–34. Then match each word with its definition to the right.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. ___ appreciate | a. stay connected to someone by calling or writing |
| 2. ___ grew up | b. friendships |
| 3. ___ keep in touch | c. a group or team of people who work together |
| 4. ___ relationships | d. like, know the value of something |
| 5. ___ staff | e. got older, changed from a child to an adult |

C. Consider the Issues

Work with a partner to answer the questions below.

1. In paragraph 3 (lines 15–21), what does Mariko Asano say are the valuable things in life? List four things below.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Choose one of Mariko's ideas and discuss why you think it is important.

Example

A: I think it's important to help each other because together we are stronger.

B: I agree. When we help another person, we become better people ourselves.

2. In your opinion, what are some of the positive and negative things about volunteering for Habitat? Add your ideas to the chart below.

Positive Things	Negative Things
1. You can help other people.	1. You don't earn any money.
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____

Based on the information in your chart, would you encourage someone to volunteer for Habitat? Why or why not?

Building Vocabulary

Using Prefixes: *un-*, *im-*, *in-*, *ir-*

You can change the meaning of many adjectives by adding a prefix that means *not*: *un-*, *im-*, *in-*, *ir-*.

For example, the word *unimportant* means *not important* and the word *inactive* means *not active*.

Examples

<i>un-</i>	<i>im-</i>	<i>in-</i>	<i>ir-</i>
unaccustomed	immobile	inconvenient	irregular
uncomfortable	impermanent	incomplete	irreplaceable
unprofitable	impossible	inactive	irresponsible
unwise	immature	inexperienced	
unimportant		independent	
unhelpful			
unsuccessful			
unhealthy			

- A. Add the correct prefix (*un-*, *im-*, *in-*, *ir-*) to each adjective below to make the meaning negative.
1. Is it impossible to learn a new language in one year?
 2. Do you think sleeping on a cement floor would be very ___comfortable?
 3. Would you like to try living in a place that you're ___accustomed to?
 4. Do you think it's difficult to work on a project with an ___experienced team of volunteers?
 5. Do you think that working for a group like Habitat is an ___regular kind of job?
 6. Do you think that money is ___important for organizations like Habitat?
 7. Have you ever been asked to do a job so difficult that you thought it was ___possible?
- B. **Pair work.** Ask a partner the questions from Activity A.

Reading Skill

Identifying the Topic and Main Idea

To identify the **topic** of a reading, ask: *What is the reading about?*

To identify the **main idea** of a reading, ask: *What is the most important thing the writer says about the topic?*

Example

The **topic** of the reading on pages 33–34 is *volunteering for Habitat*.

The writer's **main idea** is that *volunteering to help other people can change your life*.

A. Analyze the Reading

Look back at the readings in Chapters 1, 2, and 3 and complete this chart.

(More than one answer may be correct.)

Chapter Title	Topic	Main Idea
1. Are You Getting Enough Sleep? (pages 1–10)	_____	<i>Going without sleep can be bad for your health.</i>
2. Mika's Homestay in London (pages 11–20)	_____	_____
3. It's Not Always Black and White. (pages 21–30)	_____	_____
4. Helping Others (pages 31–40)	<i>volunteering for Habitat</i>	<i>Volunteering to help other people can change your life.</i>

Compare your answers with a partner.

B. Apply the Reading Skill

Read the two introductions below. Then answer the questions by filling in the correct circle.

1. **ORGANIC FOODS**

To Buy or Not to Buy Many people believe organic food is better for your health than food grown the “traditional” way. It is also more expensive. Farmers who grow organic food do not use chemicals like pesticides (chemicals used to kill insects). But the U.S. government says that organic food is not really healthier than food which is grown in the traditional way. Many people disagree. In this article, you will read an interview with people on both sides of this issue. Then you will have to decide for yourself: is organic food really better or not?

2. *Beauty* begins at the
Supermarket

Some people spend a lot of money on lotions, makeup, and hair products to make themselves look more beautiful. Here’s something they may not know: scientific studies show that beautiful skin begins with what we put in our mouths—not what we put on our faces or hair. Read this article to find out which foods can make you more beautiful. Forget the lotion, and try some broccoli instead!

- The topic of Reading 1 is ____.
 A beauty
 B food
 C health
 D shopping
- The topic of Reading 2 is ____.
 A beauty
 B food
 C health
 D shopping
- The main idea of Reading 1 is that ____.
 A organic food is healthier than other food
 B organic food is more expensive than traditionally grown food
 C organic food may or may not be better than traditionally grown food
 D organic food does not have pesticides
- The main idea of Reading 2 is that ____.
 A people should buy lotion and makeup at the supermarket
 B people can make lotion and makeup from food
 C scientists are testing beauty products more than before
 D people can become more beautiful by eating certain foods

Discussion & Writing

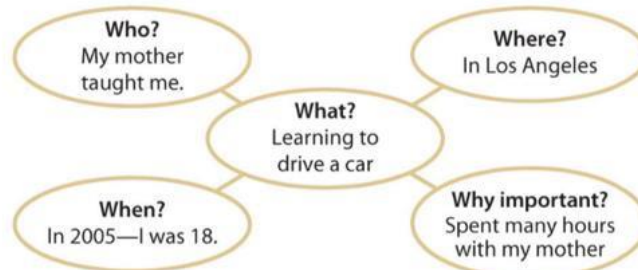
- Group work.** Which of the following volunteer opportunities would you choose to do? Why?
 - reading to a blind person
 - cooking for a sick person
 - helping someone learn to read
 - serving food to homeless people
- Being involved with Habitat was an important experience in Mariko Asano's life. Follow the steps below to write about an important experience in your life.

Step 1: Think of some important experiences in your life. List them on a piece of paper.

Example

- meeting Tina
- going to Canada
- learning to drive a car

Step 2: Choose one of the experiences on your list. Collect information about this experience in a chart like the one below.



Step 3: Write about your experience. Then tell a partner about it.

Example

Learning to drive a car was an important experience in my life. My mother taught me to drive while my father was away on business. It was important to me because I had the chance to spend a lot of time with my mother . . .

Mini-Dictionary
page 158

Words to Remember

NOUNS

lifestyle
organization
relationship
volunteer

VERBS

appreciate
offer
(keep in) touch
volunteer

ADJECTIVES

close (relationship)
uncomfortable

Abstract in Arabic

دراسة فهم المقروء لدى الطلاب الليبيين الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية:
دراسة حالة على طلاب الفصل الدراسي الأول في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية بجامعة
بنغازي

إعداد:

هناء محمود حداقه

إشراف:

أ.د. انتصار عثمان الورفلي

ملخص

هَدَفَتْ هَذِهِ الدِّرَاسَةُ إِلَى بَحْثِ اسْتِرَاتِيجِيَّاتِ القِرَاءَةِ الصَّعْبَةِ الأَسَاسِيَّةِ لَدَى طُلَّابِ الفَصْلِ الدِّرَاسِيِّ الأَوَّلِ فِي قِسْمِ اللُّغَةِ الإِنجِلِيزِيَّةِ بِكُلِّيَّةِ التَّرْبِيَةِ بِجَامِعَةِ بِنغازي. وَهَدَفَتْ إِلَى تَحْدِيدِ الأَسْبَابِ الرَّئِيسِيَّةِ وَرَاءَ هَذِهِ الصُّعُوبَاتِ، وَتَحْدِيدِ مَدَى فَعَالِيَّةِ أسَالِيِبِ التَّدْرِيسِ المُخْتَلَفَةِ فِي مُسَاعَدَةِ الطُّلَّابِ عَلَى التَّغَلُّبِ عَلَيْهَا. وَانْطِلَاقًا مِنَ المُنْهَاجِ الوَضْعِيِّ، جَمَعَتِ الدِّرَاسَةُ بَيَانَاتٍ كَمِيَّةً مِنْ جِلَالِ اسْتِيبَانِ وَتَجَارِبِ عَمَلِيَّةِ. وَكَشَفَتِ النُّتَاجُ أَنَّ القُدْرَةَ عَلَى اسْتِخْلَاصِ المَعَانِي مِنَ الكَلِمَاتِ المُعَقَّدَةِ مِنْ جِلَالِ مُكَوِّنَاتِهَا بَرَزَتْ كَأصْغَبِ اسْتِرَاتِيجِيَّةِ قِرَاءَةٍ، تَلِيهَا اسْتِنْتَاجُ مَعَانِي الكَلِمَاتِ الجَدِيدَةِ مِنْ جِلَالِ القَرَائِنِ السِّيَاقِيَّةِ، ثُمَّ تَحْدِيدُ أَسْئَلَةِ الفِكْرَةِ الرَّئِيسِيَّةِ، وَجَاءَتْ الإِجَابَةُ عَلَى الأَسْئَلَةِ النَّفْصِيَّةِ فِي المَرْتَبَةِ الثَّلَاثَةِ مِنْ حَيْثُ الصُّعُوبَةِ، بَيْنَمَا كَانَتْ الإِجَابَةُ الدَّقِيقَةُ عَلَى الأَسْئَلَةِ النَّفْصِيَّةِ الضَّمْنِيَّةِ هِيَ الأَقْلُ صُعُوبَةً بَيْنَ الاسْتِرَاتِيجِيَّاتِ الَّتِي تَمَّ تَقْيِيمُهَا. أَشَارَتِ النُّتَاجُ أَيْضًا إِلَى أَنَّ نَقْصَ المَعْرِفَةِ بِالتَّطْبِيقِ الأَمْثَلِ لاسْتِرَاتِيجِيَّاتِ القِرَاءَةِ سَاهَمَ فِي صُعُوبَاتِ فَهْمِ المَقْرُوءِ لَدَى الطُّلَّابِ. وَلِذَلِكَ، اقْتَرَحَتِ الدِّرَاسَةُ نُمُودًا مُتكاملاً للقِرَاءَةِ يَتَمَحَوَّرُ حَوْلَ المُتَعَلِّمِ. وَقَدْ تَمَّ اخْتِبَارُ فَعَالِيَّةِ هَذَا النَّمُودِجِ المُصَمَّمِ جِلَالِ النَّجْرِبَةِ. وَأُظْهِرَتْ نَتَاجُ اخْتِبَارَاتِ T لِلْعَيِّنَاتِ المُرْدُوجَةِ وَتَحْلِيلِ التَّبَائِنِ (ANOVA) بِاسْتِخْدَامِ بَرَامِجِ SPSS أَنَّ كِلْتَايِ المَجْمُوعَتَيْنِ، الضَّابِطَةِ وَالتَّجْرِبِيَّةِ، أَظْهَرَتَا تَحْسُّنًا فِي قُدْرَاتِهِمَا عَلَى فَهْمِ المَقْرُوءِ. وَمَعَ ذَلِكَ، حَقَّقَتْ المَجْمُوعَةُ التَّجْرِبِيَّةُ نَتَاجُ أَفْضَلِ مُقَارَنَةً بِالمَجْمُوعَةِ الضَّابِطَةِ. بِالإِضَافَةِ إِلَى ذَلِكَ، قَدِّمَتِ الدِّرَاسَةُ تَوْصِيَّاتٍ لِإِعْلَامِ أَصْحَابِ المَصَالِحِ وَالمُتَعَلِّمِينَ وَالمُعَلِّمِينَ وَمُصَمِّمِي المَنَاهِجِ وَصُنَاعِ القَرَائِرِ وَالبُّحُوثِ المُسْتَقْبَلِيَّةِ لِتَطْوِيرِ تَعْلِيمِ وَتَعَلُّمِ مَهَارَاتِ القِرَاءَةِ بِاللُّغَةِ الإِنجِلِيزِيَّةِ.

الكلمات المفتاحية: استراتيجيات القراءة، سياقات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المنهج المتمحور حول المعلم، المنهج المتمحور حول المتعلم.



جامعة بنغازي
كلية اللغات
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

دراسة فهم المقروء لدى الطلاب الليبيين الذين يدرسون
اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية: دراسة حالة على
طلاب الفصل الدراسي الأول في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية
بكلية التربية بجامعة بنغازي

إعداد:
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إشراف:
أ. د. انتصار عثمان الورفلي
أستاذ

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الإجازة الدقيقة
(الدكتوراه) في الفلسفة في اللغويات التطبيقية

بتاريخ 8/ رجب/ 1447 هـ الموافق 27 / ديسمبر / 2025م