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OKUMA STRATEJİLERİNİN İNGİLİZCE OKUDUĞUNU ANLAMAYA ETKİSİ

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THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION

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Dicle Üniversitesi Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim ve Sınav Yönetmeliğine göre hazırlamış olduğum "**THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION**" adlı tezin tamamen kendi çalışmam olduğunu ve her alıntıya kaynak gösterdiğimi taahhüt eder, tezimin kağıt ve elektronik kopyalarının Dicle Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü arşivlerinde aşağıda belirttiğim koşullarda saklanmasına izin verdiğimi onaylarım. Lisansüstü Eğitim-Öğretim yönetmeliğinin ilgili maddeleri uyarınca gereğinin yapılmasını arz ederim.

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İBRAHİM ÇAPAR tarafından hazırlanan "**THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION**" adlı çalışma, 18.02.2015 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda jürimiz tarafından Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalında YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ olarak oybirliği ile kabul edilmiştir.

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ÖZ

OKUMA STRATEJİLERİNİN İNGİLİZCE OKUDUĞUNU ANLAMAYA ETKİSİ
(EYLEM ARAŞTIRMASI)

İbrahim ÇAPAR

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, okuma stratejilerinin okuduğunu anlama ve bu stratejilerin katılımcıların sınav notları üzerine etkisini incelemektir.

Çalışma 15 haftalık bir eylem araştırması olup katılımcıları İngilizceyi akademik amaçlar için yabancı dil olarak çalışan 9 ziraat mühendisinden oluşmaktadır.

Veri toplama araçları arasında araştırmacı tarafından günlük olarak tutulmuş notlar, kritik olay anketi, görüşme ve ÖSYM tarafından yapılmış KPDS testleri bulunmaktadır. İlk üç veri toplama aracı içerik analizi ile değerlendirilmiş olup KPDS sınavlarının sonuçları *Friedmann Test'i* ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Tüm veri toplama araçlarının bulgularıyla okuduğunu anlama düzeyinin anlamlı bir şekilde arttığı belirlenmiştir.

Araştırmanın sonucu okuma-stratejileri ile okumanın okuduğunu anlama düzeyini ve katılımcıların sınav notlarını olumlu etkilediğini ve çalışma süreci içerisinde üzerinde çalışılan yedi stratejiden summarizing (özetleme) ve answering questions (soru-cevap) stratejilerinin daha etkili olduğunu, daha olumlu sonuçlar verip okuma motivasyonu sağladığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okuma Stratejileri, Okuduğunu Anlama, Eylem Araştırması, ÖSYM Standart Testleri, İçerik Analizi

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION (ACTION RESEARCH)

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The aim of this study is to examine the effect of reading strategies on reading comprehension and how these strategies affect the scores of the participants at SSPC.

The study was a 15-week action research, whose participants were 9 agricultural engineers, learning English as a foreign language and for academic purposes.

Data were collected through daily notes kept by the researcher, perception questionnaires, interviews were audio-taped, and SSPC standard exams were applied at the end of the study. The first three data collection instruments were assessed via *content analysis,* and the statistical values of the SSPC standard exams were assessed through *Friedmann Test.* The increasing comprehension level was found to be significant. The findings of all the instruments support one another.

Results of the study indicate that while reading through the using of reading-strategies affects the comprehension level and the scores of the participants positively. In the course of the effects of seven reading strategies were studied and among them summarizing and ask-and-answer questions strategies were found to be more effective, provided more positive results and motivation.

Key Words: Reading Strategies, Reading Comprehension, Action Research, SSPC Standard Exams, Content Analysis

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SS : Summarizing Strategy

MIS : Main Idea Strategy

IS : Inferencing Strategy

AS : Annotating Strategy

ALS : Annolighting Strategy

AQS : Answering Questions Strategy

RSSS : Recognizing Story Structure Strategy

FLE **:** Foreign Language Exam

SSPC **:** Student Selection and Placement Center

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Presentation

This chapter presents background information about statement of the problem, what reading is, what reading comprehension is, its importance, information about certain reading strategies, research questions, and definitions of key terms and abbreviations.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

It is an undisputable fact that reading is an important part of learning English. Reading, which is a language skill, helps gain vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation and so on. Reading is the means of having the knowledge of the world in all meanings. Reading has also been significant in the history. It is a known fact that in the time there were not televisions or other technological tools reading was an important activity. People used to read books and could travel to far-away lands in their imaginations.

The main aim of reading is understanding and comprehension. In order to understand a printed work, a reader must be able to decode it on the page and to make a meaning. A large body of research focuses on how readers learn to decode text and how best to foster readers' decoding skills. Decoding the skills is significant for the mental development of individuals, especially children. We can observe that children who read have comparatively higher IQs. Reading contributes mental development as well, in other words reading is useful to the mind just as running is useful to the body.

Reading is an activity enhancing concentration and conversational skills of the reader as well as the knowledge acquired. The habit of reading also helps readers to decode new vocabulary they come across in everyday life. This habit provides us with information of different topics.

Among the four language skills, reading is probably the most significant skill for students who study English as a second (ESL) and in academic contexts (Carrell, 1988a). Zhou (2008) states that the acquisition of L2 reading skills is a priority for many language learners. Reading is thought to be the primary means for gaining access to various sources of information, providing the basis for "synthesis and critical evaluation skills" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 187). Effective reading is inevitable for the use of academic documents written in English. Thus, reading comprehension has always been an important focus of research within the field of education. In addition, it contributes to independent learning regardless of the purpose of the reader (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Moreover, reading is fundamental for all academic disciplines (White as cited in Lei, Rhinehart, Howard, & Cho, 2010). Therefore, reading skills must be promoted in order for students to be able to deal with more sophisticated texts and tasks in an efficient way (Ur, 1996).

As reading is of so much importance teaching reading to EFL learners has always been an interesting subject for researchers in second language acquisition. Since reading means "reading and understanding" (Ur, 1996) rather than simply decoding written symbols, and as it is a skill that is one of the most difficult to improve to a high level of proficiency due to its complex nature, it is important to equip learners with reading strategies, which are known to be great contributors to students' motivation as well as their performance (Capen, 2010; Mizumoto & Takeuchi, 2009). However, readers do not always have enough time span to be interested in these activities, in other words, they do not have the opportunity to use time for reading.

For this reason, that is, due to the problem of time the people are to read the utmost quantity of materials in the least possible process. In a sense, this state makes using strategies a fundamental situation for the readers. Namely, it is almost a must to have the advantage of using some reading techniques or strategies in order to cope with the matter in question. The techniques or strategies each individual uses, naturally, change from person to person.

Through reading, the reader finds the possibility to make a meaning out of the text (Goodman, 1988). In the literature, these mental activities used by readers to comprehend the text better are usually referred to as reading strategies (Paris, Wasik &

Turner, 1991). Therefore, in foreign language teaching, foreign language reading should be taught and practiced as early as from the beginning level especially for young learners. The learners must have an efficient reading quality. In order to provide a more speedy and effective reading, learners must be able to take advantage of reading strategies.

A strategy is a process in which a reader selects consciously in order to succeed an aim (Paris, Lipson, & Wixson, 1983; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991), and in this process the readers improve the use of strategies by reading (Wells, 1990). In the reading context this aim is to comprehend the text as much as possible. When the readers can decide and use a reading strategy, it can be claimed that they have obtained independence in reading. The expert readers use both the strategies and a number of comprehension tools.

The teachers of foreign language should know the characteristics of reading strategies and apply them on the reading activities of the students, as it is essential for the students to be qualified on strategies in order for a better and quicker comprehension. For these aims there should be some strategies such as summarizing strategy, main idea strategy, inferencing strategy, annotating strategy, annolighting strategy, answering questions strategy, and recognizing story structure strategy. These strategies and the like are pretty possible to teach to the learners through a process. First and second language reading research has indicated that it is possible to teach reading strategies to students (Carrell, 1985; Carrell, Pharis & Liberto, 1989).

Reading in a second or foreign language can place even greater demands on the processes involved in reading due to the reader's incomplete linguistic or cultural knowledge (Bouvet, 2000). However, there is evidence that second or foreign language readers can "compensate for a lack of English proficiency by invoking interactive strategies, utilizing prior knowledge, and becoming aware of their strategy choices" (Hudson as cited in Auerbach & Paxton, 1997, p. 238).

The readers of L2, especially English in this case, spend time on reading for different purposes such as improving the language for practical uses like finding a job, obtaining a career and so forth. Additionally, some readers go through the texts in order to improve the translation of the academic texts, while they also have to pass a test, which is unavoidable for the academic promotion in Turkey. As seen in the literature,

using the reading strategies, while reading, is of utmost importance, and because there are different strategies aiming distinctive targets in L2 the readers must be well aware of which is/are to make use.

FLE, which is arranged twice a year in Turkey by SSPC (OSYM), is an exam directly based on reading skill. In order for the academics, and applicants as well as the staff of most of the governmental institutions to have good scores in FLE, they have to pass through a quality reading process. In this course of the study the strategies of reading will provide them a significant development.

The readers today do not always have enough time to read in other words they have to read a lot of materials in a very short time. This has to be like that sometimes in exams, as well. Furthermore the people, today, are occasionally very busy on their daily businesses while they also have to study, thus reading a great deal of stuff. For these reasons it is essential to make use of reading strategies, which make this process easier if used conveniently. Strategic readers become more aware as they read. They also realize when the meaning of a text breaks down.

Contrary to the belief that using and teaching strategies is a waste of time, it is very beneficial and it empowers comprehending because it is beyond reading unconsciously. It provides awareness. To sum up it is to the good of the readers to have knowledge of the reading strategies.

1.3. Purpose and Significance of the Study

In today's world almost everybody is obliged to read very different sorts of texts. In other words the significance of reading cannot be disputed. The readers may have different characteristics, aims, length of time when they read. This reality affects the reading style, which can be supported by the strategies of reading. The insufficiency of capability to make use of an appropriate reading strategy is a problem in general. TAt this point we come across the importance of using of strategies. The purpose of this study is to determine a reading strategy that will help readers to comprehend the text well. This study presents a detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis and comparison of seven strategies of reading, which are summarizing strategy, main idea strategy,

inferencing strategy, annotating strategy, annolighting strategy, answering questions strategy, and recognizing story structure strategy.

As mentioned above every reader of a foreign language does not read a text with the same purpose, and hence they may take benefit of different strategies. To determine appropriate reading strategies to be used by foreign language learners, the present study aims to find out students' ideas on the importance of reading through reading strategies, and determine the readers' perceptions about them. The present study also aims at determining which reading strategy suits to the readers. Some of the readers of foreign languages read in order to take high scores of FLEs. The study tries to show if reading via strategies help enhance the students' FLE scores.

Review of the literature indicates that reading through strategies have the readers achieve competences as a result of using an appropriate strategy. The study tries to reveal what competences are obtained in the wake of the process.

The results of this study will hopefully contribute to the literature by filling these gaps and may lead researchers to conduct studies about the relationship between other reading strategies.

1.4. Research questions

Based upon the statements above this study investigates and tries to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the learners' perceptions about reading strategies?
Research Question 2: What competences are achieved through using reading strategies?
Research Question 3: What is the role of study via reading strategies on the readers' exam scores?
Research Question 4: What is the role of learning style in reading strategy preference?
Research Question 5: What is the most favoured reading strategy?

1.5. Operational Definition of Key Terms

The following terms are used throughout this study:

Reading Comprehension: Comprehension, which is a useful expression that contradicts the term decoding (Urquhart & Weir, 1998) by putting the emphasis on reading and understanding (Ur, 1996), is the most widespread purpose for reading and it is usually assumed to be easy reading (Grabe, 2009; Grabe and Stoller, 2002). Comprehension occurs when the reader creates a link between the text and what s/he already knows (Koda, as cited in Grabe, 2009).

Reading Strategies: Making the meaning of a text consciously through mental operations that a reader uses on purpose (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Kern, 1989).

Strategic Reader: A reader with the capability of using strategies in accordance with his/her purposes (Janzen & Stoller, 1998).

1.6. Limitations of the Study

The study was applied to the students attending the courses that aim at preparing students for FLE (Foreign Language Exam) which is held in Turkey, mostly for academic purposes. In this sense there are some limitations:

One limitation is the fact that the students are to do a great deal of reading in a restricted time, for there are only two exams a year. Another major limitation is that the classes in these courses have a previously determined number and this number is usually low. Therefore, it makes it difficult to generalize the conclusions.

The students attending these courses do not generally have the same level of reading comprehension. These level differences may lead to different results. And as these courses are voluntary ones the attendance of the participants to the class may not be quite regular and this may be another limitation for the present study.

1.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented the background of the study, statement of the problem and the significance of the study together with the research questions of the study.

The second chapter presents an overview of the related literature. The methodology of the study is explained in detail in Chapter III. Chapter IV presents the results of the data analysis.

Finally, Chapter V draws some conclusions based on the results from Chapter IV, as well as presenting pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Presentation

This chapter reviews relevant literature while providing details about reading and concepts related to reading along with reading strategies. Reading will be examined in general. Several definitions of reading from literature will be included. Reading strategies will be studied and their classifications will be investigated. The importance of reading strategy instruction will be emphasized. The uses of instructional models will be presented. Further, definitions of the concepts together with their types are explained in this chapter.

2.2. Reading

Experts define reading in different ways. According to Frank Smith 'reading is a specialized and complex skill involving a number of more general skills that have to be understood in any serious analysis of the subject' (1971: 1). As Rivers defined, 'reading is both a source of gaining knowledge and it is also a pleasurable activity' (1981:259). The definition of reading is stated by Wallace (2001: 23) as follows: Reading, for some, means reading words, and success is judged by the number of words which can be read out of context; for others, successful reading is judged from the earliest levels, even by beginner readers, in terms of the ability to make sense of continuous text, beyond word level.

Broughton et al. stated that 'we have three components in the reading skill; A, the recognition of the black marks; B, the correlation of these with formal linguistic elements; and C, the further correlation of the result with meaning' (1985:90).

In accordance with this idea, Smith (1971) points out that reading depends on the information getting through the eyes to the brain and what the brain tells the eye is much more important than what the eye tells the brain.

Nunan states that 'unlike speaking, reading is not something that every individual learns to do' (1999:249). Because when reading, it is necessary to use some strategies and it is quite possible to learn those strategies.

Grabe and Stoller (2001) claim that if one reads some kind of material it is a must that s/he absorbs a certain amount of information and relate it with already-existing information and anticipations.

According to Grabe and Stoller readers have some attributes in common and they say that those who read fluently, particularly qualified L1 readers, have some similar qualities, some of which are that they:

1. Go through the text for a quick comprehension
2. Synthesize the text information with previous knowledge
3. Determine the target
4. Comprehend the text in detail
5. Make use of the strategies Grabe and Stoller (2001, 168).

Considering these characteristics of a fluent reader, Grabe and Stoller (2001) believe that L2 learners need some properties in order that they can become more fluent in reading. Reading is crucial for various processes and reasons such as communication, comprehension, advancing in an academic career, personal development, professional promotion, and so on. Therefore, reading and comprehension are to be at a certain level, which we may claim as proficiency. In this way a reader can find the opportunity to come to a proficient level in a language, notably English being the international language today. Indeed, proficiency in English, which is regarded as the foremost second language in the world, certainly has more to do in widening a learner's horizon in every phase of the educated world (Crystal, 1989: 358; 1995: 106; Cook, 2003: 25, 26). A series of functions of reading are determined by Siegel and Fonzi (1995, p. 644). These functions are as follows:

a. Reading to get a meaning.
b. Reading to get feedback.
c. Reading to create a presentation.
d. Reading to make sense of text.
e. Reading to spark an idea.
f. Reading to revise a text (Siegel & Fonzi, 1995, p. 644).

Reading is also inevitable for human's intellectual development. The actual act of reading literary texts is seen as part of a wider process of human development and

growth based on understanding both one's own experience and the social world. Reading is one aspect of act of knowing and as a creative acting. In this sense reading the world precedes reading the word (Frere, 1983).

Reading is a complex, multi-sided activity, and it involves several wide skills (Loucky, 2003). Inasmuch as reading means perceiving (Ur, 1996), and it is not simply decoding written symbols, and because it is a skill that is one of the most difficult to improve to a high level of proficiency due to its complex nature, it is important to provide learners with reading strategies. The strategies are known to be crucial contributors to motivation and performance of the students (Capen, 2010; Mizumoto & Takeuchi, 2009).

Day stresses that (2008) in order that a reader can become an effective and fluent in a foreign language s/he is to use the strategies and this process has a number of important benefits for the learners. Some of them are:

- It consolidates the learning.
- It helps the learners to increase the knowledge.
- It provides the reader with learning about the target culture.
- It contributes the learners to acquire a life-long skill.
- Finally, it is possible to do everywhere.

According to many reading specialists, reading is an interactive process. The reader is to interact with the text in order that s/he can create meaning because every reader's mental process does not function at the same level (Bernhardt, 1986; Carrell, Devine & Eskey, 1988; Rumelhart, 1977). In that interaction, "the relationship between the learners' variables (interest level in the text, purpose for reading the text, knowledge of the topic, foreign language abilities, awareness of the reading process, and level of willingness to take risks) and text variables (text type, structure, syntax, and vocabulary) determines the level of comprehension" (Hosenfeld, 1979).

Mitchell (as cited in Dubin et al., 1986) explains reading as a skill to form meaning from the scripts. Smith (as cited in Dubin et al., 1986, p. 28), however, regards reading as an intentional process in which the reader comments the text. Widdowson (as cited in Dubin et al., 1986) sees reading as a link between the written text and the reader. He also says that reading is the relation between the information in a text and previous knowledge of the reader.

In order to that the students can cope with the changing process of the world, they have to learn all through their life. Reading appears very important at this point. As reading creates the biggest part of the learning processes, students ought to have a significant reading process. As stated by (Yalcın and Sengul, 2004), "if there is no enough of reading one cannot reach the desired level of learning."

Today in order to be efficient, the students must be in a race and they are to read expertly, think well, and communicate more effectively through writing and speaking (Levy & Murnane, 2004). As Conley (2008) stated, to successfully operate at school environment and work, now and in the future, the learners need to master cognitive strategies for reading, writing, and thinking in complex situations where texts, skills, or requisite knowledge are fluid and not comprehensible everytime.

Reading is indispensible in academic terms. In terms of academic achievement, reading, writing, and critical thinking are crucial skills that students need so as to be successful in the learning environment. The reading ability and eventually absorbing information from reading is a fundamental skill to achievement in any field of study (Act, 2005). The 2002 Condition of Education report suggested that a reading insufficiency is the biggets obstacle to students' achievement in college (Wirt et al., 2002).

There is evidence that college students' motivation towards long reading is declining, so is their ability to read critically and to make meaning from the materials they read (Donahue, Voelkl, Campbell, & Mazzeo, 1999). Research shows that students do better in post-secondary education when they have enough reading comprehension (Cox et al., 2003; McCabe, 2000; Oudenhoven, 2002).

It will certainly be useful to relate the importance of reading skill for the foreign language learners. In English language learning reading is one of the most important mechanism (ELLs; Cummins, 1991). For second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learners, reading is significant because they count on more powerfully on their literacy knowledge (Eskey, 2005).

2.2.1. The Reading Process

Readers usually do not try hard in reading process and they do not prepare well-built plans for it (Grabe, 2009). However, as Goodman (as cited in Schulz, 1983) mentions it, reading is actually a complex activity. It is defined as a "psycholinguistic guessing game" (p.128) and it requires planning theories about the text and accepting or denying the theories in question after relating with the text. Adopting Goodman's description of reading as complex, Grabe (2009) claims that a mere sentence cannot suffice to depict reading complexity. According to Urquhart and Weir (1998), "reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language form via the medium of print"(p.22). It is also accepted as a psycholinguistic process because the reader makes meaning using a linguistic image, and this shows that there is a relation between the language and idea in reading (Goodman, 1996).

According to Eskey reading is simply a way of "accepting the world" because it is a cognitive action, and in this activity readers relate their newly-gained knowledge to their already-gained knowledge, and Eskey calls it the "theory of the world" (Eskey, 1988).

Given the study about reading in the first language, Goodman (Devine & Eskey, 1988) claims several processes. The brain is responsible for these processes: recognition, confirmation, correction and termination. The first step is recognition. In recognition step the brain realizes a graphic indication and then starts the reading process. The second step, which is called guess, occurs when the brain looks for "order and significance in sensory input" and as a result, it makes expectations as the reading advances. The third step is verification with the input presented. Correction takes place when the brain starts to reprocess as a result of the disconfirmations or inconsistencies. In general, conclusion appears when the task is done. Nevertheless, it can, in addition, occur in the event that the reader cannot make the full meaning, when the text is not interesting enough or the content is too familiar or when it is not suitable for the target (Devine & Eskey, 1988).

The teaching of reading in a second language context is becoming more and more crucial, and this reality is evidenced by many professional resources and articles

written on the topic (Day, 2008). This indicates that reading is one of the fundemental focuses in learning and teaching a foreign language.

2.2.2. The importance of reading in language teaching and learning

English, which is a global language today, has a huge effect on educational systems throughout the world, and this brings forward the importance of reading in a second language (Grabe, 2009).

Today it is a must to be a good reader. However, it is rather difficult to be successful if the individual is not a skilled reader (Grabe, 2009). An individual's chances for achievement will be much greater through skilled reading attributes. Hasbun (2006, p.38) highlights the importance of reading by stating that reading skills "lie at the heart of formal education" and it is difficult to achieve many things without having the ability to read fluently and with good comprehension.

Reading texts supply chances to study a language: vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we make sentences, paragraphs and passages. Well-structured reading texts can offer interesting topics, initiate dispute, stir imaginative replies and be the motive-force for attractive lessons (Harmer, 1998:68).

As Richards (1990:95-97) stated an effective reading lesson depends on the teacher's approaches to the teaching of reading. They are as follows:

1. Instructional objectives are used to guide and organize lessons.
2. The teacher has a comprehensive theory of the nature of reading in a second language, and refers to this in planning his teaching.
3. Class time is used for learning.
4. Instructional activities have a teaching rather than a testing focus.
5. Lessons have clear structure.
6. A variety of different activities are used during each lesson.
7. Classroom activities give students opportunities to get feedback on their reading performance.
8. Instructional activities relate to real- world reading purposes.
9. Instruction is learner focused.

Zhou (2008) asserts that the acquisition of L2 reading skills must be an importance for many language learners around the world. Many EFL students do not have to speak English on a daily basis, but it might be a must that they need to read in

English frequently in order to make use of various pieces of information, and most of the information in question is recorded in English (Eskey, 1996). Furthermore, reading is inevitable for all academic disciplines (White as cited in Lei, Rhinehart, Howard, 1998 & Cho, 2010). For this reason, reading skills have to be improved so that students can deal with more complex texts in an efficient way (Ur, 1996).

Carrell et al. (1988) claim that it is easy to understand that "reading is the fundemental reason" for the students all over the world when acquiring a foreign language. No doubt that the role of reading comprehension has a huge importance in EFL and ESL settings, and this has been more and more important day by day over the years. Today reading itself is seen as a very important skill by itself. In fact, as Carrell et al. (1988) claim that without solid reading proficiency, second language readers cannot perform at levels they must in order to succeed.

Grabe et al. (1986) suggest that there are so many reasons why reading should be given importance in academic environements. The first reason is that it stems from the idea that reading is learning, and also that reading contributes students' development in their writing skills. This approach serves to press the idea that "skillful reading can enhance language teaching (Cohen, 1990). Another second reason why reading comprehension needs to be of greater importance is that at universities reading is the most important skill for students (Devine & Eskey, 1988). A different reason depends on the fact that EFL learners should improve fluent reading abilities which will let them be like a native reader.

2.2.3. The three phases of reading lessons

Three phases should be applied in order that learners get information from reading materials in an efficient manner with full comprehension. The three phases are called pre-reading, while reading, post reading (Kaya, 2007).

2.2.3.1. Pre-Reading

The objective of pre-reading phase is stated by Williams (1984:37) as follows:

1. to introduce and arouse interest in the topic.
2. to motivate learners by giving a reason for reading.

3. to provide some language preparation for the text.

Brown (2001: 315) suggests that "before reading, some time should be spent on introducing a topic, encouraging skimming, scanning, predicting, and activating schemata." And he goes on saying that "students can bring the best of their knowledge and skills to a text when they have been given a chance to 'ease into' the passage."

Auerbach and Paxton (1997:259) state that there are some pre-reading strategies that help the teacher to use in the classroom. They are as follows:

1. Accessing prior knowledge
2. Writing your way into reading (writing about your experience related to the topic)
3. Asking questions based on the title
4. Semantic mapping
5. Making predictions based on previewing
6. Identifying the text structure
7. Skimming for general idea
8. Reading the introduction and conclusion
9. Writing a summary of the article based on previewing

According to Grabe & Stoller (2001: 191) pre-reading can help five important targets. "It helps students access background information that can facilitate subsequent reading, provides specific information needed for successful comprehension, stimulates student interest, sets up student expectations, and models strategies that students can later use on their own."

2.2.3.2. While Reading

According to Brown (2001: 315) "not all reading is simply extensive or global reading." He also believes that there may be some realities or that students should not miss while reading. While reading, instruction serves students all through the text, and it generally focuses on perceiving hard concepts, understanding complex sentences, thinking about considering links among ideas or characters of the text in a purposeful and strategical manner (Brown, 2001; 46).

The following list is about some specific while-reading strategies:

1. Note the key words in the first sentences of the paragraph or text.
2. Decide which word announces the main topic of the paragraph or text.
3. Decide which words announce the specific aspect of this topic of the paragraph.
4. Note if there is a sentence that states a probable main idea.
5. Note the most important words from each sentence as you read.
6. Ask yourself how this information relates to the information that came before it.
7. Look for examples that illustrate the ideas stated before.
8. Look for details that provide more specific information on the topic.
9. Look for a sentence that concludes this particular aspect of this topic.
10. Look for words that indicate a change in the kind of information.
11. Look for a sentence that provides information about a new aspect of this topic. (Aebersold &Field 1997: 98)

2.2.3.3. Post- Reading

After reading a text, there are some post-reading activities recommended to be done, which can be mentioned as follows:

1. Identify the topic of the reading
2. Have a general idea of what the text says about its topic
3. Understand the main ideas put forth in the text
4. Discern the relationships among the main ideas
5. Understand the details given in the text support the main ideas
6. Recognize the information the text implies but does not state
7. Recognize the structure of the information in the text
8. Identify the language used to show the organization of ideas
9. Assess the value of the information presented in the text
10. Recognize language use, such as irony or satire (Aebersold & Field 1997: 117).

2.2.4. Fluent Reading and Automaticity

Within the context of fluent reading in L1 and L2, Grabe (1991) proposes 6 components of reading skills: "(1) automatic recognition skills, (2) vocabulary and

structural knowledge, (3) formal discourse structure knowledge, (4) content/world background knowledge, (5) synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, and (6) metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring" (p. 379).

Automaticity is a state "when the reader is unaware of the process, not consciously controlling the process, and using little processing capacity" (Adams, Carpenter, Stanovich as cited in Grabe, 1991, pp. 379-380). The development of automaticity in reading, especially in word identification skills, plays an important role in fluent reading (Adams, Beck & McKeown, Gough & Juel, Perfetti, Stanovich as cited in Grabe, 1991). Fluent readers, as Grabe (1991) points out, have the automatic lexical access skills developed at feature, letter, and word levels whereas "many less-skilled readers lack automaticity in lower-level processing" (p. 380).

2.2.5. Text

Academic text means a text that is especially prepared so that college instructors or students can use for their academic aims, or it is a writing that your lecturer has assigned as it is beneficial (http://www.tc.umn.edu).

Rusciolelli (1995) states that efficient readers can improve an efficient relation with the text through the knowledge they already know and their experience in order to comprehend new information. In the text there is a variety of types of elements such as realia, and the conventional paper-based text. Literate people are to know the change of literacies and to be able to use the new types of text. They have to be able to consider about, evaluate, and interprete the new text and absorb information from it (Anstey & Bull, 2006; Chatel, 2002). However, much technology association affects the consideration of literacy and other factors such as social and cultural components also play crucial roles in the path of learning (Warschauer, 1999).

2.2.6. Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is an active process, and it is used to construct meaning from text, scripts and so on; in this process it is essential to access the already know information, understand the vocabulary and and phrases, make some predictions, and

connect crucial ideas and thoughts. It is not possible to learn comprehension through a direct instruction or teaching, but it involves several strategies that affect making meaning from the text. Comprehension includes the following (Paynter, Bodrova, & Doty, 2005):

- Applying privious knowledge to the text,
- Having goals for reading,
- Using strategies and skills,
- Realising the author's aim,
- Separating facts and fictions,
- Drawing inferences.

Considering this reality, the teacher has role during reading comprehension, which is to make sure that students take part in actively before reading, have the strategies and skills that they can use while-reading, and try to make meaning of the text. Understanding the author's intention must be carried to the meaing of the text. The usage of strategies gets more and more essential. The readers can be taught to use the comprehension strategies used by excellent, mature comprehenders. Moreover, when the readers learn strategies, their comprehension gets better and better (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995).

Comprehension is crucial to gaining a new linguistic system: input is to be decoded in some comprehensible manner for second language acquisition (SLA) to occur (e.g., Chaudron, 1985; N. C. Ellis, 1994a, 2001; R. Ellis, 1985; Gass, 1997; Gass & Selinker, 2001; Krashen, 1985; Lee & VanPatten, 2003; Long, 1985; Schmidt, 1990, 1995; Sharwood Smith, 1986; VanPatten, 1996, 2003).

The concept called to be comprehension a useful one, but it contradicts the term "decoding" (Urquhart & Weir, 1998) because it puts the press on reading and understanding (Ur, 1996), and is the most widest target for reading. It is usually assumed to be easy reading (Grabe, 2009; Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

The RAND Reading Study Group (2002) stated that comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" (p. 11). Duke (2003) added "navigation" and "critique" to the definition because she believed that readers actually go through the

text, find their way, evaluate the exactness of the text to see if it is appropriate with their personal knowledge, and at the end reach at a self-selected location.

Comprehension takes place when the reader connects a relation among the various kinds of information from the script and what s/he previously knows (Koda, as cited in Grabe, 2009). People read for different aims: for education, profession, or occupation. Without attention to what target the reader has for reading, it is expected that s/he deciphers the information in the text as well as synthesize, and utilize that information (Grabe, 2009).

However, reading comprehension is not always easy. Schulz (1983) verifies this cosideration by making an assessment between reading comprehensions and listening comprehension. He states that in conversation, native speakers of a language naturally modify their speech stressing the words, articulating them more clearly, or by paraphrasing what they have said.

Because reading comprehension is not simple or straightforward and requires the harmony of several processes such as carefulness, memorizing, and understanding, it is generally believed that reading in any language is demanding (Flavell, Miller & Miller; Garner & Taylor; Paris & Myers as cited in Brand-Gruwel, Aarnoutse & Boss, 1998; Kern, 1989). Research claims that reading in a second or foreign language can emerge even greater demands on these processes (Kern, 1989).

Teachers must be well-sophisticated at this dimension of the issue. It is a must that they are skillful in their instruction and must reply flexibly to students' requirements for informative response to an inquiry or experiment as they read. In order that somebody can do that, teachers must have a firm perception not only of the strategies that they are teaching the readers but also of strategies that they can use to succeed the target (National Reading Panel, 2000, pp. 4–7).

If we are to improve reading comprehension in schools and maintain them, we have to go on developing the fluency skills while at the same time increase one's concentration on bettering reading comprehension (Snow, 2002). Since comprehension is the eventual aim of reading, any effort to better reading—and to raise that betterment in the course of the time—must begin early and stay coherent with focusing on bettered conclusions in comprehension (National Research Council, 1998).

According to some teachers, comprehension is little more than establishing students' making sense of a story. Frequently, teachers are happy when they see students who are capable of answering questions reasonably well. For those who cannot answer questions well enough or prove any understanding of the text, teachers often provide the responses by cueing them to crucial information or asking extra questions. However, this is not adequate. "The best way to ensure improved literacy among students is to directly and explicitly teach comprehension strategies." (Vaughn S. & Linan S., 2004).

More than 20 years ago, Durkin (1978–79) claimed that in a study of over 4000 minutes of 4th grade reading instruction, only 20 minutes of comprehension instruction was recorded. The findings appalled researchers and teachers at the time. More recent studies indicate that enough comprehension is still not being achieved as much as it is to be. This inefficiency must be overcome (Pressley & El-Dinary, 1997; Schumm, Moody, & Vaughn, 2000; Vaughn, Moody, & Schumm, 1998).

Generally teachers ask questions to readers routinely after reading but they are infrequently given clues of the comprehension strategies that the readers need in order to answer the questions. Briefly, assigning too much and exposing with many questions are confused with instructing (Cunningham, 1998, p. 47).

The goal of all reading comprehension is to improve the performance of all students to understand and make a better sense of reading texts (Brown et al., 1988).

During the last few decades, theories and models of reading have changed a lot, from seeing reading as receptive processes to interactive processes between the reader and the text (Adams, 1990; Eskey and Grabe, 1988; Perfetti, 1985; Samuels, 1994; Stanovich, 1992; and Swaffar, 1988).

Pearson and Johnson (1972; 36) and Nuttall (1996; 101) identified six types of comprehension questions. These are:

- Literal comprehension
- Reorganization
- Inference
- Prediction
- Evaluation
- Personal response

Researches have shown that effective teachers asking higher level questions, which go further than literal comprehension of a text than less effective teachers (Knapp, 1995; Taylor, Peterson, Pearson, and Rodriguez, 2002). This enables a good reason for teachers to have their students engage in all types of comprehension.

Comprehension questions are also a crucial point that should be given importance. There are generally five types of comprehension questions identified by Pearson and Johnson (1972) and Nuttall (1996):

- Yes/no questions
- Alternative questions
- True or false questions
- Wh- questions
- Multiple-choice questions

2.2.7. The challenges of reading

Beck's (1991; 43) studies indicate that reading comprehension difficulty, in general, is about making sense of texts. As is evident in following studies, research on text processing indicates any of the following common patterns found in social studies and science textbooks can make comprehension challenging:

- Failure to make logical (i.e. causal) connections between propositions explicit;
- Use of references that are ambiguous, distant or indirect;
- The inclusion of information that is irrelevant to the main ideas.
- The features enumerated above tend to characterize what are sometimes called "inconsiderate texts".Textbooks are not the only source of inconsiderate texts. Primary source documents can also be inconsiderate (Beck, 1991).

2.2.8. Instructor's Role in Reading

In successful area classrooms, teachers arrange teaching in routine ways that enable understanding of reading as a meaning-making process (Michaels, 2002). They

- Provide instructed support;
- Sequence inquiry tasks;

- Concentrate classroom on texts and the usage of what they use; (Michaels, O'Connor, Hall, & Resnick, 2002);

The most essential point of these main applications is composing an expectation through creating routines (Lee, 2001, 2007). Routines help to determine students' expectations for their actions, how they do them, and the reaon. The following quotation, often mentioned by the Strategic Literacy Initiative, clearly shows the often unstated consideration about reading that readers have learned through many years (Carol D. Lee 2001; 96).

> … it wasn't like it was spread all over the place, like you had to read it. It was just like, if the " red square question" was here, you knew it was somewhere around that area right there. And you could just look for the answer and copy it down and you got full credit for it. So you didn't have to read. It was something that you could like slide by without them knowing. I don't know if they cared or not, but that's the way everybody did it. You see the "red square question" and you sort of calculate where it's around, you find the answer, and you write it down, and that's it.

2.2.9. The Prior Knowledge and Comprehension

The link relation between previous knowledge and reading comprehension has always been investigated, and this is heavly carried out in native-language. Conclusion in this field has shown a positive effect, in both adults and children (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Weber, 1991). Adams, Bell, and Perfetti (1995) investigated the relation between knowledge of a specific domain (football) and reading skill in text comprehension. Their conclusion was that reading comprehension and domain knowledge make useful contributions to reading comprehension and reading speed. Research has shown that this both influences what a reader makes from a text, and his or her comprehension of the content (Alderson, 2000). Indeed, the previous knowledge of the world and information of the topic can support understanding when it is

necessary to make up for language hardness (Bernhardt, 2005; Stanovich, 1980). The fact that one is capable of reading means making meaning from text and linking new information with the previous knowledge**.**

It is likely that world knowledge affects reading comprehension. Many demonstrations indicate that readers who have rich previous knowledge about the subject of a reading often comprehend the reading texts better (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). That said, readers do not link their previous knowledge to the text, even if they have knowledge related to the information it contains. "Often, they do not make inferences based on prior knowledge unless the inferences are absolutely demanded to make sense of the text." (McKoon & Ratcliff, 1992).

Stahl, Chou Hare, Sinatra, and Gregory (1991) studied domain knowledge in relation to vocabulary knowledge among 10th graders. They came to the conclusion that previous knowledge and word knowledge have crucial effects on understanding the content of the text.

Research has established that readers' existing knowledge is critical for them to perceive, or understand about what they read (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Fincher-Kiefer (1992) also figured out that previous knowledge made comprehension of a text easy. Bugel and Buunk (1996) demonstrated that the text topics of a foreign-language reading comprehension examination gave an advantage to boys, because the topics of the texts were of more interest to boys than girls. Lipson (1983) compared the reading comprehension of children in relation to their religious affiliation and found an effect of religious relationship on reading comprehension when children read texts about a topic coping with aspects of their well-known or unknown religion.

The amount and depth of a reader's world knowledge vary as do other individual characteristics. Readers' skills, knowledge, cognitive development, culture, and purpose wich they bring to a text are different (Narvaez, 2002).

Pritchard (1990) examined the role of cultural form on the reading comprehension processes of proficient ninth-grade readers with an American or a Palauan background. Steffensen, Joag-Dev, and Anderson (1979) found that acquaintance with the subject contributes the second- language reader to make a meaning. Malik (1995) studied the oral-reading behavior of proficient second-language readers using culturally familiar and unfamiliar texts. He found that cultural schemata

significantly affected the reading comprehension process in that the reading of unfamiliar text involved less integration compared with familiar text.

Johnson (1981) studied on the effect of both linguistic complexity and the cultural origin of a text among a group of Iranian ESL students and American monolingual students. Half of the participants read two unadapted English texts of two stories, one from Iranian folklore and one from American folklore. The other half read the same stories in adapted or simplified English. Results on a multiple-choice test with questions on explicit and implicit information in the texts indicated that the cultural origin of the story had more effect on the comprehension of the ESL students than the level of semantic and syntactic complexity (adapted versus unadapted).

Kerkhoff and Vallen (1985) studied the relation between cultural origin of a text and second-language reading comprehension of Dutch, Turkish, and Moluccan children living in the Netherlands. They found an obvious contact between text and ethnicity, indicating a facilitating effect if the children's setting and the cultural origin of the text matched.

From research in psychology and SLA, we know that greater levels of background knowledge and expertise in a given subject matter contribute to efficiency of attentional allocation to input during reading, enabling richer analyses and textual interpretations, and, in turn, superior memory performance (e.g., Bartlett, 1932; Bernhardt, 1991; N. C. Ellis, 2001; Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994; Kintsch, 1998; Lee, 1997; Nassaji, 2002; Robinson, 1995, 2003; Rumelhart, 1980; Schank & Abelson, 1977).

The textbase contains the propositional meaning of the text, which then ‘‘becomes integrated into the reader’s global knowledge, forming a coherent mental representation of what the text is about’’ (Nassaji, 2002, p. 453). In this view, the knowledge that guides comprehension is ‘‘generated through activation patterns initiated by the textual information and the progressive upgrading of previously established associations in the text’’ (p. 455).

There is ample empirical support for the positive effects of background knowledge on L2 text comprehension, namely, that comprehension is enhanced when readers possess prior knowledge of the topic (e.g., Barry & Lazarte, 1998; Carrell, 1987; Chen & Donin, 1997; Hudson, 1982).

2.2.10. Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

A review of the literature confirms the primacy of vocabulary knowledge for successful second language reading, and it is almost impossible for learners to understand texts without knowing what most of the words mean (Baldo, 2010; Fraser, 1999; Nagy, 1988; Schmitt, 2004; Walters, 2004, 2006a-b).

Vocabulary is one of five core components of reading instruction that are essential to successfully teach children how to read. These core components include phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). Vocabulary knowledge is important because it encompasses all the words we must know to access our background knowledge, express our ideas and communicate effectively, and learn about new concepts. "Vocabulary is the glue that holds stories, ideas and content together… making comprehension accessible for children." (Rupley, Logan & Nichols, 1998/99). Students' expression knowledge is related robustly to academic success because students who have large vocabularies can understand new ideas and concepts more quickly than students with limited vocabularies. The high correlation in the research literature of word knowledge with reading comprehension indicates that if students do not adequately and steadily grow their vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension will be affected (Chall & Jacobs, 2003). Vocabulary experts agree that adequate reading comprehension depends on a person already knowing between 90 and 95 percent of the words in a text (Hirsch, 2003).

Some students have limited vocabulary knowledge as a result of a language-based learning disability. Good oral vocabulary (words we use in speaking and listening) is linked directly to later success in reading, and students who have more vocabulary knowledge in kindergarten become better readers than those who have limited vocabulary (National Institute for Literacy, 2001).

The growth of word knowledge is slow and incremental, requiring multiple exposures to words (Hirsch, 2003; Stahl, 2004). "Vocabulary knowledge seems to grow gradually moving from the first meaningful exposure to a word to a full and flexible knowledge" (Stahl, 1999).

In order to foster such important skills as reading, it is important to consider the close relationship between reading and vocabulary knowledge, which is the most important factor with regard to the comprehension of a text (Baldo, 2010; Nagy, 1988; Nassaji, 2006; Schmitt, 2004).

Although vocabulary knowledge is not sufficient to explain reading comprehension (Baldo, 2010), Anderson and Freebody (as cited in Nagy, 1988) point out that a learner's vocabulary knowledge profile is the best predictor of that learner's level of ability to understand the text. In a consistent way Schmitt (2004) also asserts that the percentage of known and unknown vocabulary is one of the most significant factors determining the difficulty of a text for a learner.

Therefore, the strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension makes the need for teaching students more words apparent. However, the massive size of the vocabulary learning task makes it clear that direct instruction cannot be sufficient on its own for all vocabulary acquisition (Nagy, 1988; Sternberg as cited in Walters, 2004). In addition to direct vocabulary instruction, new words can also be acquired incidentally, in other words, while reading with no stated purpose of learning new vocabulary (Schmitt, 2010). Nagy (1988) argues that what is needed to produce vocabulary growth is more reading, rather than more vocabulary instruction. He goes on to say that learning from context is certainly an important part of vocabulary growth. It becomes apparent that looking into how ESL/EFL learners deal with unknown words in a reading text is an important part of L2 reading research (Baldo, 2010).

Walters (2004) reports that readers have several ways to cope with unknown words while reading: they can look up the word in a dictionary, they can consult someone about the meaning of the word, they can try to guess the meaning from context, or they can ignore the word. However, since attention to an unfamiliar word is essential for any learning to occur (Ellis, Gass, Schmidt as cited in Fraser, 1999), ignoring words frequently limits the learning potential to a great extent (Fraser, 1999).

There are important differences in language and vocabulary knowledge (Hart & Risley, 1995), on early numeracy skills (National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008), and on important cognitive processing skills such as working memory (Baker, Kame'enui, Simmons, & Simonsen, 2006).

With a fluent reader, the process of word recognition proceeds effortlessly and rapidly in the working memory. When the reader encounters a problem, an unfamiliar word, for instance, the process may slow down or even stop entirely while the reader attempts to use "other knowledge sources, regardless of their level in the processing hierarchy" to deduce meaning (Stanovich, 1980, p. 3; see also Bernhardt, 2005). However, due to the limited processing capacity of the working memory, this will reduce reading speed and fluency (Bernhardt, 2005; Rayner & Pollatsek, 1989; Stanovich, 1980). This slowdown highlights the importance of a large sight vocabulary for fluent reading, an area where one finds the main differences between reading in an L1 and in a foreign language. Grabe (1988) argued that the lack of "a massive receptive vocabulary that is rapidly, accurately and automatically processed . . . may be the greatest single impediment to the fluent reading by ESL students" (p. 63). Grabe (2009) repeated that for reading in a foreign language the "importance of word recognition is hard to overestimate" (p. 23). Alderson (2000) put this as follows: "Measures of a reader's vocabulary knowledge routinely correlate highly with measures of reading comprehension, and are often, indeed, the single best predictor of text comprehension" (p. 35). The importance of vocabulary knowledge notwithstanding, fluent reading in an academic context also requires the ability "to integrate text and background information appropriately and efficiently" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 28). This involves using background knowledge, that is, content knowledge and knowledge of the language and text types. It also involves other cognitive processes. The following focuses on the processes of metacognitive monitoring and reading strategies.

Reciprocal relationships between reading comprehension and general lexical knowledge have been demonstrated for first language (L1; e.g., Anderson & Freebody, 1981; Stanovich, 1986; 472 Language Learning Vol. 54, No. 3 Sternberg, 1987) and L2 reading (e.g., Bossers, 1992; Haynes & Baker, 1993; Koda, 1989; Laufer, 1992).

In a study, Rott (1997) examined the relationship between text comprehension and vocabulary gains and retention with intermediate learners of German, also determined by enrollment in a 4th-semester course. She used brief narrative passages (60 words). The results demonstrated moderate to strong significant positive correlations between immediate text recall and gain and retention of TWs, as measured by an L2-L1 translation task and also a multiple-choice translation recognition task. She

also found that the relationship between text recall and incidental vocabulary acquisition strengthened over time: Participants who achieved greater levels of text comprehension retained new vocabulary over an extended period of time (i.e., 4 weeks).

In recent years we have learned a lot about the relationship between vocabulary learning and reading. For example, we have learned something about how many words we need to know in order to read effectively in a foreign language; the rate of vocabulary uptake and decay from reading; the number of meetings it takes to learn a word; and the retention of recently learned words (Waring & Takaki, 2003).

The most striking examples of the positive effects of extensive reading come from the .Book Flood.Studies by Elley (1991). These involved spending a large proportion of the English programme on extensive reading where learners chose from a wide range of interesting texts. The Fiji book flood study (Elley & Mangubhai, 1981) lasted eight months and brought about dramatic improvements in a wide range of language skills including reading comprehension, knowledge of grammatical structures, word recognition, oral repetition, and writing. Unfortunately, this study did not include a measure of vocabulary growth, but it is clear that the improvement on the various measures used could not have occurred without substantial vocabulary growth. Elley (1991: 378-379) saw the success of the book flood being due to five factors.

1. Extensive input of meaningful print.
2. Incidental learning.
3. The integration of oral and written activity.
4. Focus on meaning rather than form.
5. High intrinsic motivation.

Laufer (1989) and Liu & Nation (1985) have shown that unless there is at least 95% or higher coverage rate (the percentage of the vocabulary that is known by the reader) of the running words in a text, the probability of successful guessing of unknown words will be severely reduced. Hu & Nation (2000) suggest it should be at least 98%. This was determined by using several texts with different unknown word rates and by measuring adequate comprehension. No subject reported adequate comprehension of text with only 80% coverage rate, but at 90% and 95% coverage a few did, and only at the 98% level did most subjects gain adequate comprehension.

Carver (1994) suggests a similar figure of 98-99% for native speakers for reading to be pleasurable. Coverage rate and vocabulary size are closely related and so we will now look at how large a vocabulary is needed to reach these high coverage rates.

Most studies in this area have looked at the learning of English but some have looked at other languages (e.g. Ostyn & Godin, 1985 looked at Dutch). Laufer (1992) has suggested that a vocabulary of 3000 word families of general English is enough for a good understanding of a general English text such as a novel. Other estimates have been as high as 5000 word families (Hirsh & Nation, 1992) as an adequate level for pleasure reading. The number of words needed for the reading of technical texts such as science texts, or newspapers is larger than for less formal texts. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, there are higher proportions of academic and technical words in formal informative writing. Chung & Nation (2003) found that 38% of the running words in an anatomy text and 17% of the words in an applied linguistics text were technical words. Some of these words were drawn from the high frequency and academic vocabulary, but more were from what would in other texts be considered low frequency words. Secondly, because of the heavy cognitive demands of formal texts, higher text coverage is likely to be needed. Where the text content is important we are less tolerant of unknown words. Thirdly, if formal reading is for academic purposes, then several subject areas and topics are likely to be covered. The more diverse the range of subjects and topics, the much larger the vocabulary required (Sutarsyah, Nation & Kennedy, 1994). In an extensive reading programme for elementary and intermediate foreign or second language learners, graded readers need to play an important role (Day & Bamford, 1998; Hill, 1997). Without graded readers, elementary and intermediate learners would not be able to do extensive reading at the proper vocabulary levels (Nation & Deweerdt, 2001) and a very important means of reading skill development, language consolidation and vocabulary learning would not be available to them.

One aspect of language on which all teachers and researchers taking major roles in the language learning process can agree is that being competent in a second language requires learning vocabulary, as evidenced by the high correlations between vocabulary and various areas of language proficiency (Schmitt, 2010). An example of this strong relationship has been seen between vocabulary and reading. When the factors that are essential to reading are examined, vocabulary knowledge is generally held as the major

one. It has been recognized as the main predictor of successful reading by many scholars (Baldo, 2010; Nagy, 1988; Nassaji, 2006; Schmitt, 2004).

The difficulty or the ease of comprehending reading texts can even be determined according to the difficulty of the words they include (Kilian et. al., 1995). In order to be successful readers, learners need to recognize the written words and know what they mean (Biemiller, 2007). Since vocabulary knowledge is a great contributor to reading comprehension, lack of sufficient lexical knowledge is an apparent and serious problem for L2 readers (Grabe, 2009). However, the great number of vocabulary items makes it clear that direct instruction cannot be not sufficient to help learners overcome the difficulty (Nagy, 1988; Schulz, 1983; Sternberg as cited in Walters, 2004).

2.3. Reading Strategies

It is a well-known fact that almost all the people are related to reading in a way, though their purposes are not always the same. They may have several aims such as academic one, following the news, reading for pleasure, getting prepared for exams etc. In addition to this reality, the readers do not have the same time opportunity and this leads to the fact that they must read quickly and comprehend the text as much as possible. There is an element facilitating this situation that is, they can make use of reading strategies, which they think is suitable with their purpose of reading and which they have information about.

In this study we aim at determining the effects of using seven reading strategies. The literature review has indicated that reading strategies are very important to use in language learning. Accordingly, the literature was reviewed in order to have information over what reading strategy is and a detail about the seven strategies in question. At the end of the study it is aimed at finding the learners' perceptions on those strategies as well as what competences the learners obtain. One other aim is to learn whether the strategies affect the students' FLE scores, while also another one is determining the role of learning style when the learners prefer using reading strategies. The final aim of the study is to see if the readers favor one or more strategies more than the others.

In the literature, reading strategies are linked with various terms such as comprehension strategies (Block, 1986; Pressley, 2001; Williams, 2002), reading

processing strategies (Pritchard, 1990) and literacy strategies (Whitehead, 1994). Among these terms, reading strategies will be used in this study.

Students need to be explicitly taught the answers to these four questions to increase the likelihood of independent strategy use:

- What is the strategy?
- How do you perform the strategy?
- When would you use the strategy?
- Why would you use the strategy?

The first two are literal and the second two are metacognitive. The answers to all four questions should be explicitly taught at the same time as the strategy is explicitly taught. The answers are taught as think alouds during instruction (http://www.readinglady.com, 08.04.2013)

Strategies are known to be learning techniques, behaviors, problem-solving or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient (Oxford and Crookall, 1989). Research in second language reading suggests that learners use a variety of strategies to assist them with the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information (Rigney, 1978).

Routman (2003) defines reading comprehension strategies as procedures for reducing the hardness level and bettering comprehension. Reading comprehension strategies can contribute readers to keep the key points in mind, separate the necessary information from the unnecessary, consider about the key points and have an idea about the subject matter. Good readers take advantage of lots of strategies during all the stages of reading (Dogan, 2002).

In many first language studies, the use of various strategies has been found to be effective in improving students' reading comprehension (Baker and Brown, 1984; Brown, 1981; Palinscar and Brown, 1984). Some studies have also investigated the reading strategies used by successful and unsuccessful language learners.

In a second-language study, Hosenfeld (1977) used a think-aloud procedure to identify relations between certain types of reading strategies and successful or unsuccessful second language reading. Various other studies in the area of reading

strategies have found that younger and less proficient students use fewer strategies and use them less effectively in their reading comprehension (Garner, 1987; Waxman and Padron, 1987).

Reading strategies have been the main focus of investigation of reading research since the 1980s (Grabe, 1991). Reading strategies, the resources readers use in order to make sense of the written material, refer to "the mental operations involved" (Barnett, 1988) when readers approach and process a text effectively. Reading strategies are considered very crucial. Research evidence suggests that efficient reading is not only determined by proficiency in the target language but also by effective use of strategies (Carrell, 1988).

The view that suggests using effective strategies results in better reading performance is supported by research evidence (Cohen, 1990). A study done by Cohen (1990) demonstrated that the learners who received strategy instruction on word guessing became better problem solvers when encountering an unknown word. In another study, Carrell (1988) investigated the effects of strategies related to the text structure of a text and found out that using strategy to identify text structure helped learners recall the text better both in terms of main ideas and the supporting ones. The conclusion drawn out from Carrell (1988) study is that in order to be a proficient reader being able to read the printed language is not enough; what is needed to make sense of that printed language is the use of effective reading strategies.

Within the new literacy contexts, readers use strategies to facilitate their meaning-making process for both their first language (L1) and L2. In other words, they employ strategies to make their reading more efficient and effective regardless of their language level (Oxford & Crookall, 1989). The strategic patterns differ, however, for each person and context. Skillful readers adopt reading strategies such as thinking about the topic, moving back and forth in the text, monitoring their comprehension, and planning when they are reading more frequently than do unskilled or novice readers (Block, 1992; Brown, 1980; Carrell, 1989; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Paris & Jacobs, 1984; Wilhelm, 2001). Research into L2 readers' reading-strategy use in the new literacy context, however, is scarce.

Paris et al. (1991) relate reading strategies to four problems. First, reading strategies are difficult to differentiate from other cognitive processes related to thinking,

reasoning, studying or motivational strategies. Although the strategies related to these processes may influence reading, they are not described as reading strategies by all researchers (Paris et al., 1991). The second problem is concerned with the scope of reading strategies. It is not clear whether these strategies are global or specific. While Levin (as cited in Paris et al., 1991) claims that strategies include numerous components that need careful analyses, Derry and Murphy (as cited in Paris et al., 1991) "distinguish strategies as general learning plans that are implemented through specific tactics" (p.610).

The third problem is related to intentionality and consciousness. Some researchers argue that strategies are more effective when implemented deliberately and with some awareness (Wellman as cited in Paris et al., 1991), whereas others assert that strategies function best when they are used without deliberation (Pressley, Forrest-Pressley & Elliot-Faust as cited in Paris et al., 1991).

Finally, although the terms strategies and skills are sometimes used interchangeably, it is agreed that a distinction between reading skills and strategies exist. Alexander, Graham and Harris (1998) highlight two differences between strategies and skills: (a) "automaticity of performance" and (b) "learner awareness or intentionality" (p. 135).

Based on this distinction, skills are defined as automatic or routinized information-processing techniques that are applied to a text unconsciously because of expertise, repeated practice, luck, and naive use (Alexander et al., 1998). Thus, they are performed the same way every time used (Duffy, 1993). Strategies, on the other hand, are referred to as tactics that readers use deliberately when routine techniques are inadequate to resolve a given interpretation (Anderson, 1991; Carrell, 1998; Paris et al., 1991). Strategies are, thus, employed differently because the unique nature of each text requires readers to modify strategies to fit the demands of the text (Duffy, 1993). If strategies are conscious actions that can be controlled by readers, they are used selectively and in combination (Carrell, 1998; Paris et al., 1991). In this sense, a skill can become a strategy if it is employed deliberately.

Considering the classification of strategies, it is a must to say that a coherent classifying has not been completed. Oxford (1990), for example, divides strategies into six categories: memory, cognitive, metacognitive, compensation, social, and affective

strategies. Cohen (1998), on the other hand, proposes four groups of strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective. Despite the inconsistencies existing across taxonomies related to the classification of reading strategies, the most frequently mentioned strategies in the literature fall within the categories of cognitive, metacognitive, text-level, and word-level strategies (Yetgin, 2003).

Another major point that definitely must be tackled is the needfulness of reading strategy instruction. Paris et al. (1991) assert that there are six main reasons why it is important to develop strategic readers in educational settings. First, through the use of strategies, students can "elaborate, organize, and evaluate the information in the text" (Paris et al., 1991, p. 609). Second, knowledge of reading strategies helps learners to improve the cognitive strategies that are used to increase attention, memory, and learning.

Third, strategies are individual cognitive tools that the students can control and use selectively to aid comprehension. Fourth, "strategic reading reflects metacognition and motivation because readers need to have both the knowledge and disposition to use strategies" (Paris et al., 1991, p. 609). Fifth, strategies can be taught directly by means of which students develop critical reading and thinking skills.

Finally, strategic reading facilitates learning throughout the curriculum by encouraging independent and autonomous learning (Paris et al., 1991). Reading strategy instruction has two main components: direct explanation and scaffolding (Harris & Pressley as cited in Sinatra, Brown & Reynolds, 2001). The first component, direct explanation, requires teachers to (a) describe the strategies, (b) motivate and inform students about the benefits of using strategies, (c) provide students with a step-by-step explanation of how to use the strategies through modeling, think-alouds or talk-alouds, (d) create different contexts to help students understand how to vary their strategy use in accordance with changing purposes, and (e) help students evaluate their strategy use (Sinatra, Brown & Reynolds, 2001). The second component of strategy instruction, scaffolding, includes shifting responsibility for strategy use from teachers to students (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, Pearson, 1991; Paris et al., 1991).

It is often taken for granted that students at this level have developed the skills and strategies needed for academic reading in their L1 and that they should be able to transfer them to their reading of English as an L2 (Koda, 2005, 2007). However, the

ability to do so depends on their L2 proficiency, also known as the linguistic threshold level. This means that if a reader's L2 proficiency falls below a certain level, the transfer of these skills and strategies to the L2 is prevented even though the student is a fluent reader in the L1 (Alderson, 2000; Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995; Carrell, 1991; Laufer, 1997).

2.3.1. Summarising

Summarising is shortening a work of art or a speech without undoing the content and the structure of the work or the speech in question (MEB 2004:197). According to Murrel and Surber (cited in 1991:587-588) teaching summarising to students is a very important endeavour. It may help students comprehend the text. While summarising the students get in a trial to find the gist of the subject. According to Senemoglu (2004:56) students' summarising a text is one of effective learning strategies of studying.

As Barnet and Stubbs (1995:302) cited "writing an efficient and accurate summary is crucial to academic qualifications such as writing down notes from the material read, composition writing exams, laboratory reports, book critics, and other informative and analytic works."

According to Egen and Kauchak (1992) summarising reinforces students in many aspects. Some of them are: 1) reading meaningly, 2) establishing important points, and 3) creating the contents with his/her own words. In this way the learner uses these principles, brings the information together, and makes it meaningful. Thanks to summarising strategy the learners learn which key words and points they are to focus on. However, learning how to summarise takes a great deal of time and requires application a set of strategies.

This strategy can be used with the whole class, small groups, or as an individual assignment. Summarizing text by using writing activities builds on prior knowledge, helps improve writing, and strengthens vocabulary skills (Jones, 2007).

On the ReadingQuest.org website, Jones (2007; 82) defines the bare essentials as the gist, the key ideas, and the main points worth remembering. What do we really want students to accomplish when we ask them to summarize? Jones suggests that students

begin to develop strong summarization skills when they are able to consistently complete the following tasks:

- Strip away the redundant and extraneous examples
- Focus on the heart of the matter
- Seek key words and phrases that manage to capture the gist
- Save the main ideas and crucial details that support them

It is easier said than done. Without explicit instruction, Jones says, students are much more likely to take the following routes:

- Write down everything
- Write down next to nothing
- Write way too much
- Don't write enough
- Copy word-for-word

Summary in short;

- is a basic reading technique.
- pulls together information in order to highlight the important points.
- re-iterates the information.
- shows what the original authors wrote.
- addresses one set of information (e.g. article, chapter, document) at a time. Each source remains distinct.
- presents a cursory overview.
- demonstrates an understanding of the overall meaning

(http://drsaraheaton.wordpress.com)

2.3.2. Annotating

Reading and writing should be essential components of any classroom. It is important to prepare students to read and write more effectively so they can gain more information from their reading materials. Annotation is a reading strategy that students can, and do, adopt and use in subjects such as mathematics, social studies, literature, and science. Annotation is a structured way to mark up text so it is more manageable (Zywica & Gomez, 2008).

Annotation is one of several cognitive literacy strategies (Conley, 2008; Pressley, 2006) that are used to help students see structure, analyze ideas, derive meaning, and communicate understandings.

As in the examples provided by Conley (2008), it could be very easy for teachers to use annotation repeatedly in hopes that students will pick up on its purpose and function, rather than using annotation as a means to get students to critically develop their reading skills and to gain content knowledge. Teachers must explicitly connect annotation and the content. Teachers should avoid teaching annotation as a separate task and instead introduce it as an integrated resource and skill for learning content. While it remains unclear how cognitive strategies like annotation are applied and transferred into other content areas and environments (Conley, 2008), our work suggests that tightly coupling annotation to content benefits student learning.

Annotating is a writing-to-learn strategy for use while reading or re-reading. Annotating helps readers reach a deeper level of engagement and promotes active reading. It makes the reader's "dialogue with the text" (Probst) a visible record of the thoughts that emerge while making sense of the reading. While annotating for deep meaning or underlying messages, students might mark these areas with a symbol such as an asterisk, and marginal notes would be shortened versions of the types of responses readers write after reading. (O'Donnel, 2004). They are unconsciously using reading strategies that allow them to read quickly while maintaining a high level of reading comprehension. The lack of these effective reading strategies is often what prevents struggling readers from excelling with reading. Fortunately, you can teach reading strategies to struggling readers to help them improve their reading comprehension.

Often, educators call these reading strategies "scaffolding" techniques because they help struggling readers build their way up to reading comprehension, much as a scaffold helps a construction worker to build upward from the ground. One such scaffolding skill that you can teach to struggling readers is the annotation of text. This means, quite simply, that the reader "marks up" sections of text, either with a highlighter or underlining, and makes notes in the margin in his/her own words, to ensure understanding.

Annotation helps build three key reading skills. When annotating a text, the reader:

1. Formulates questions in response to what he is reading,
2. Analyzes and interprets elements of poetry or prose,
3. Draws conclusions and makes inferences based on explicit and implicit meaning (Reading-Strategies-that-Work-for-Struggling-Readers.aspx).

When annotating a text the three steps to be taken are as follows:

Before Reading

- Examine the front and back covers (books)
- Read the title and any subtitles
- Examine the illustrations
- Examine the print (bold, italics, etc.)
- Examine the way the text is set up (book, short story, diary, dialogue, article, etc.)

As you examine and read these, write questions, and make predictions and/or connections near these parts of the text.

During Reading

Mark in the text:

- Characters (who)
- When (setting)
- Where (setting)
- Vocabulary
- Important information

Write in the margins:

- Summarize
- Make predictions
- Formulate opinions
- Make connections
- Ask questions
- Analyze the author's craft
- Write reflections/reactions/comments

- Look for patterns/repetitions

After Reading

- Reread annotations—draw conclusions
- Reread introduction and conclusion—try to figure out something new
- Examine patterns/repetitions—determine possible meanings
- Determine what the title might mean

2.3.2.1. Benefits of Annotating

From their reflections, I saw that annotating had helped students see that reading is a process and that applying the ways of responding to text through annotation changes comprehension. Because annotating slows the reading down, students discover and uncover ideas that would not have emerged otherwise (O'Donnel, 2004). According to O'Donnel,

a) Annotating helps teach reading as a process.
b) Annotating changes comprehension.
c) Annotating slows down the reading.
d) Annotating promotes more active reading.
e) Annotating helps improve writing.

2.3.3. Annolighting

In general terms annolighting is highlighting an important text in reading and making thoughtful annotations (comments) about the text. There are several purposes for making advantage of annolighting a text, some of which are to:

- Set a purpose for reading that leads to understanding of the big idea,
- Capture main ideas / key concepts / details of a reading,
- Target, reduce and distill the needed information from a text,
- Improve efficiency in reading and reviewing text,
- Strengthen reading comprehension (http://tr.scribd.com).

If done well, highlighting can become a very effective reading tool; if done poorly, it is most likely a waste of a student's time, energy and ink. "Annolighting" a text combines effective highlighting with marginal annotations that help to explain the highlighted words and phrases (http://www.whsd.k12.pa.us).

2.3.4. Answering questions

The Reading Assessment Test challenges you to read short passages and answer questions that require you to:

1) Identify the main idea of a passage
2) Read a passage for specific details
3) Identify the author's purpose for writing a passage or the author's tone
4) Make inferences based on the facts presented in a passage.

Raphael (1984, 1986) studied the question-answer relationship; he came to the conclusion of a taxonomy broken into four levels: Right There, Think and Search, the Author and You, and On My Own. This strategy promotes active comprehension of the message of the author and provides students with a way to think about questions and answers.

Raphael introduced the QAR strategy by discussing the different kinds of questions, discussed the differences between the questions. The properties of sorts of questions he mentioned are as follows:

- **Right There**: The answer is textually explicit (can be found in the text), usually as a phrase contained within one sentence.
- **Think and Search**: While the answer is in the text, the answer is implicit and the student is required to combine separate sections or chunks of text to answer the question.
- **On Your Own**: Requires students to think about what is already known from their reading and experience (schema and prior knowledge) to formulate an answer.

- **Author and You**: As the answer is not directly stated in the text, the student draws on prior knowledge (schema) and what the author has written to answer the question (http://www.mrscowan.com, 10.04.2013)

2.3.4.3. Strategies for Answering Specific Detail Questions:

The reader who wishes to find specific details about questions must:

- Identify the most important word(s) in the question.
- Make mental notes related to the word or phrase as you read.

2.3.4.4. Strategies for Answering Main Idea Questions

In order to determine answers to the main idea questions a reader is to:

- Look for key words that identify the question as a main idea question.
- Read the passage and make notes.
- Remember to pay special attention to words such as but, yet, although, since, except, moreover, unless, nonetheless, however.
- Learn to spot wrong answers.

  The answers given to the main idea questions are sometimes wrong and thet the following features:

a) too broad – the answer covers too much, is too “big” in some way
b) too narrow – the answer is too restricted in outlook, too “small
c) irrelevant – the answer is not directly related to the question
d) incorrect – the answer distorts or contradicts facts in the passage
e) illogical – the answer is not supported by facts in the passage (http://www.massbay.edu, 09.04.2013)

As answering-questions-reading-strategy is based upon the questions, the readers must know about the types of questions generally asked in tests. There are several types of questions on most tests. Let’s look at some of them:

1. Multiple-Choice Questions. These questions require you to select one answer from several possibilities.

2. Main Idea Questions. These types of questions usually ask about paragraphs that you have read.

3. Fill-in-the-Blank Questions. Read the sentence with each of the choices then select the one that makes the most sense.

4. Questions that refer to visuals. Read all the charts, maps, posters, diagrams, and pictures (http://www.mrscowan.com/readingstrategies.htm, 10.04.2013).

2.3.5. Main Idea Strategy

Recognizing the main idea is the most important skill you can develop in order to become a better and faster reader. It is generally author's primary target about a topic.

In a paragraph, authors often present the main idea to readers in a single sentence called the topic sentence. Sometimes a story or a text lacks a topic sentence, but it still has a main idea. The author has simply decided to let the details of the selection suggest the main idea. You must find what that implied main idea is by deciding upon the point all of the details make when they are all added together.

Texts or stories that hint an idea sometimes share supporting details first. The reader is to make a guess in order to realize the main idea (http://www.google.com.tr).

2.3.6. Inferencing

To "infer" is to draw a logical conclusion from what is known or assumed to be true, in this case from what is written in the passage. Inferences are not stated explicitly in the passage. Rather, inference questions require you to draw conclusions from the factual knowledge or evidence presented.

In different words, inference refers to drawing conclusions based on your knowledge and understanding of the text you are reading. It is often called "reading between the lines". Making inferences means choosing the most likely explanation from the facts you know.

http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/readsask/lesson_plans/lp_reading_inferences/lp_reading_inferences.pdf

"Inference" is a conclusion or judgment that one makes. The reader must choose a likely inference based on the facts she/he is given and knowledge she/he has. Although they are related, inferring is often confused with making predictions.

Predictions made about outcomes, events, or actions are confirmed or contradicted by the end of a story. Inferences, on the other hand, are more open-ended and may not be resolved at the conclusion of a story. Readers will often use other aspects of a piece of writing to make inferences.

Making inferences is important to reading for many reasons. One reason is that inferring helps readers to comprehend words and text that they are unsure of. Secondly, making inferences allows the reader to get to the heart of things—the deeper meanings and value of the writing. Through inferences the reader discovers what is important, why it is important, how events and characters can influence one another, and how one incident can lead to another. Making inferences allows the reader to connect to the writing and figure out how the text relates to them or what the text means to the reader personally. When readers make an inference, it plants intrinsic motivation in them by involving them in the story and relating them to the happenings and meaning behind the text (http://www.decd.sa.gov.au).

From their study on the role of linguistic knowledge, Kaivanpanah and Alavi (2008) identified seven different inferencing strategies. Nassaji (2006) identifies similar strategies but categorizes these strategies into three types: identifying, evaluating, and monitoring. Under the category identifying, there are three subtypes, two of which overlap with the Kaivanpanah and Alavi (2008) findings. The first is word analysis, and this aligns with word morphology and considering class membership, as well as analyzing the compound words into their constituents. The second is word-form analogy, and it overlaps with phonetic similarity. The final subtype of the identifying category is repeating, where the learning attempts to infer the meaning of a word by repeating it or any of the words near the unfamiliar word. Evaluating is the second type and it has two subtypes: verifying and self-inquiry. Monitoring is Nassaji's final type, which he defines as, "the learner shows a conscious awareness of the problem by judging its ease or difficulty" (p. 392).

Learners can utilize the type of strategies that Hamada (2009) identified as local strategies, where an attempt is made to infer the meaning of a word by analyzing the unfamiliar word with a narrow focus on the word itself, and global strategies that encourage the learner to utilize their knowledge of the outside world and their understanding of the text for clues as to meaning of the unfamiliar word.

In order for inferencing to be a valid option for learning new words in L2 reading, it needs to be effective. This paper will now turn to examining the effectiveness of inferencing in L2 reading. However, there are many factors that can affect the success of inferencing. Kaivanpanah and Alavi (2008), Hamada (2009), and Nassaji (2006) argue that the level of language proficiency plays a role in inferencing effectiveness.

The Walters' (2006) study perhaps offers the best data for classroom instruction. That is, her findings suggest that strategy training as well as teaching learners to use context clues can aid in inferencing success for learners of most levels of proficiency. She further goes on to say that more practice helps the learner to use his inferencing strategies more effectively. Hamada (2009) likewise stressed the importance of effective strategy use. Knowing what time to use which strategy may even be more important than knowing the different inferencing strategies. This effective strategy use may further be an integral part of classroom instruction and interaction if there is indeed a threshold of strategy use. One limitation about inferencing is that they may be confused with each other, while they have different features and peculiarities. They have similar as well different properties. We can mention some of the as in the following lines.

- A prediction is what you think will happen based upon the text, the author, and background knowledge.
- Inference is reading all of the clues and making your best guess.
- Inference is similar to prediction but they are not the same.
- When inferring, you are using all clues to draw conclusions about what is being read.
- When you make predictions, your prediction will be proven by the end of the story. When inferring, you may or may not know the answer to your question by the end of the story.
- As a reader, you can make predictions a text BEFORE reading.
- As a reader, you can make inferences DURING reading.
- Making inferences/predictions are a way to check for understanding.
- Making inferences/predictions require the use of additional strategies to ensure comprehension (http://www.slideshare.net).

2.3.7. Recognising story structure

It is crucial to understand the organization of a story as this helps readers to make a meaning, and be aware of the structure which includes setting, characters, plot, and theme. Often, students learn to recognize story structure through the use of story maps. Instruction in story structure improves students' comprehension (Maria, K., 1990).

Story structure is important because most narrative stories are organized around a set of segments that are called story grammar or a story map. Learning about the structure of stories provides readers with a schema they can use when reading or listening to a new story or writing a story on their own. In the following line you will read about the elements of a story:

- **Setting**

The setting of a story tells *when* and *where* the story takes place.

- **Characters**

Characters are the people, animals, and other individuals that populate a story.

- **Plot**

The plot of a story tells what happened.

- **Theme**

The theme is the big idea that the author wants the reader to understand.
(http://netjobsformakingmoremoney.blogspot.com)

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, a review of the literature on the nature of reading, reading strategies, reading strategy instruction, successful and unsuccessful reader strategies, and methods used to determine the strategy use were presented. In the next chapter, information about the methodology of this study will be presented.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Presentation

This chapter consists of the research design, the research population sampling, data collection tools, and data analysis techniques. In addition, reliability and validity of the study, data on the participants and instruments of the study are presented here.

3.2. Research Design

This study focuses on reading strategies on five aspects. The first one is determining the learners' perception of the strategies. Moreover, the study tries to determine the competences gained thanks to the strategies. Another aim of the study is to learn whether they affect the participants' FLE scores and the role of learning style. The final purpose is to find out if the participants prefer one or more strategies more than the others.

In order to find the answers to the research questions, this study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. The qualitative data consisted of interviews, perception questionnaires and daily observations, and quantitative data included the grades of the participants as a result of the exams applied nearly once a month. The qualitative data of the study was evaluated through content analysis, while the quantitative data of the study were tested by Friedman test.

The overall scope of the study is an action research as it was carried out through a process of seven cycles. In each cycle a different reading strategy was used and each one consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting the stages. The time span of each cycle was not exactly the same and it was decided by the reflections obtained from the participants. Some cycles were longer since the participants wanted to continue to study in that way, while the others were short either because participants did not find those strategies charming enough, or they did not consider them beneficial for their purposes of reading in English.

3.2.1. Action Research

Action research is a form of research which is carried out for special practices (cited in Tammelin, 1988, 154, Kemmis 1993, 177). It has been quite popular in education over the past few decades. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, 6) see the linking of the two terms, 'action' and 'research' are essential as improvement and increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Kemmis (1993, 184) emphasizes that the method of action research is its distinguishing aspect. The method relies on the thinking of self-reflection consisting of cycles. The cycles are the basic elements of action research: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

The action research has a process which contains the needs, documenting the steps of inquiry, analyzing data, and making informed decisions. All these elements can lead to desired outcomes. It is also a process in which participants examine their own educational practice (Watts, 1985).

Collaborative action research may include as few as two teachers or a group of several teachers and others interested in addressing a classroom or department issue. This issue may involve one classroom or a common problem shared by many classrooms.

Stephen Corey at Teachers College at Columbia University was among the first to use action research in the field of education. He believed that the scientific method in education would lead to bias because educators would be involved in both the research and the application of information. (Corey, 1953)

Corey believed that the value of action research is in the change that occurs in everyday practice rather than the generalization to a broader audience. He saw the need for teachers and researchers to work together. However, in the mid 1950s, action research was attacked as unscientific, little more than common sense, and the work of amateurs (McFarland & Stansell, 1993). It is now often seen as a tool for professional development, bringing a greater focus on the teacher than before (Noffke & Stevenson, 1995).

This study, which lasted for four months, consisted of seven cycles. The frequency of the classes was two days a week and each day covered three hours. In the

first two hours reading strategies were used to teach the participants about the strategies, and in the third hour the ordinary process of the class went on, which means preparing for the ÜDS exam (Interuniversity Board Foreign Language Examination), whose name was later changed into YDS (Foreign Language Exam). Each cycle aimed at employing a different reading strategy. When necessary the strategy was changed and a different one started. The total number of the strategies was seven. These strategies were summarizing, main idea strategy, inferencing, annotating, annolighting, answering questions, and recognizing story structure.

The usage of any single strategy would normally be two weeks, in other words each cycle would take two weeks time. But as every single strategy was not found useful and effective and did not meet their needs the length of each cycle was not the same. When it was found necessary the cycles were changed sooner or later. At the end of the study seven cycles were completed.

The first cycle started after an exam whose target was to determine the level of the participants. In that exam the questions used were the specific questions of an exam that was already made by SSPC (Student Selection and Placement Centre).

At the initial stage of the study some participants expressed their anxieties. There were several reasons for the anxiety. One was that they were studying and preparing for an exam which was important for their academic career. They wondered whether they would spend too much time on strategies, and whether their preparation for the exam would be interrupted. A second reason was that it was the first time they studied a language using strategies consciously. Another reason was that they wanted to be quite efficient about the study and what if they could not be excellent? They were relieved about all the reasons. For instance if extra classes were necessary, it would be programmed. All the details about the strategies would be taught to them and the efficiency would not be impeded.

The texts used in the class were from different sources including the texts or paragraphs of the exams of the previous years. The texts were at the same level. One example was the book called “Reader at Work” by METU.

The beginning was made with summarizing strategy. It continued for two weeks. First of all, the strategy was introduced to the students. Some simplifying points of summarising were expressed to them. The participants read the text, found the unknown

vocabulary. Those words were studied. The text was translated into Turkish, and the exercises were completed. The participants themselves focused on the text themselves. The participants, then, were given information about how to start a summary, and the facilitating points of the summary. Later on the participants began to write their summaries. The first examples done by the participants included different levels of the grammar and vocabulary. Naturally they were not sophisticated sentences. Nevertheless they, in general, expressed that this trial increased their self-confidence.

In the second class of the week, in which summarising would go on the participants were more comfortable and relieved. In the third and fourth classes of summarizing strategy the participants did their studies on their own, needing no help. The sentences were more accurate. The critics towards being more motivated were the overall ideas obtained from the students. Similar activities were done for the application of other strategies, too. When it was necessary, alterations were made in the process, and sometimes cycles were changed. Participants' feedback was noted in the daily observations and so went on the process.

During the summarising strategy cycle the participants shared their ideas and expressed what they considered about the study. For instance, in the fourth class of the cycle two of them stated that they could do it without having any contribution. But the translation of the text was completed together with all the other participants in case the others would have a difficulty comprehending the text, which had the utmost importance in summarising.

At the end of two weeks a perception questionnaire about the participants' consideration on the summary was performed. From the information, it was decided to continue the first cycle one more week since the participants were pleased and they felt they learnt new words. The summarising strategy had a two-week time under normal circumstance but as it was found quite beneficial by the participants it was continued one more week, which means the first cycle went on. In other words the first cycle, being summarising strategy, was about three weeks. In the third week some more summaries were written by the participants and after the third week a different cycle was started.

In the next cycle the strategy to be used was annotation. The participants were given information about this strategy, as well. The difference between summarising and

annotation was explained in detail. In this cycle the participants had to examine the texts in detail according to the rules of annotation. This examination involves checking the properties of the text to a great extent such as the covers of the books, titles, subtitles, and even the printing style. Moreover, the reader has to be careful about the characters, setting, vocabulary, and then must summarise without writing, make predictions, connections and ask questions. At the end of these examinations a reader should re-read annotations and draw conclusions.

In the cycle of annotating, which took two weeks, some participants pointed out positive ideas, while others still claimed summarising was more efficient for two reasons because it was quite impressive for memorising words and useful to improve the article writing. After two weeks was over another perception questionnaire was performed. Besides, the daily observations were taken down. As a result of the feedbacks that the participants reflected in the perception questionnaires and their opinions observed during the classes the study of annotation strategy was ended at the end of the second week of the second cycle, which was the end of the fifth week. Participants suggested changing the strategy because they wanted to try a different strategy and the cycle was altered.

At the end of the fifth week an exam prepared with the questions of previous SSPC (OSYM) exams was applied. The exam consisted of 40 questions, each of which had a value of 2,5 points. The average grade of the results was 43,33 points and it was higher than the level-determining exam. The participants were pretty happy with the result, and hence they wanted to continue to study the strategies. One participant suggested studying different strategies because it could be possible to find better strategies. The others agreed with him and they wanted to continue with a different strategy. In other words, what the participants wanted was the trial of different strategies.

In the third cycle it was time to begin to study the annolighting strategy. Annolighting reading strategy is quite similar to annotating and the only difference is that it is applied to one part of a text rather than the whole text under the control of the instructor. This feature of annolighting was explained to the participants in the first class of this cycle. In the sixth week, which was a part of the third cycle the strategy was studied on six texts but the participants did not want to continue as they did not feel that

they learnt something new. Two participants told that it might be useful because we have to concentrate on the certain parts of the texts deeply sometimes and annolighting appears to be quite appropriate for this skill. It was not quite possible to continue the annolighting strategy and the perception questionnaire was applied. According to the results it was high time to change the cycle just in one week and in the seventh week a different strategy was on the way.

The following cycle was recognising-story-structure strategy (RSSS). It was studied in the seventh and eighth week. At the end of the eighth week the perception questionnaire was performed for recognising-story-structure strategy (RSSS), and the daily observations went on. The daily ideas and sharings were taken down. The participants implied that this strategy is to be changed and the study went ahead with the next strategy, called inferencing strategy. Like the other strategies that we used before this one the participants were given information about RSSS. This strategy is, as can be guessed through its name, more about examining stories or novels because it involves the analysis of characters, setting, problems and their solutions of the plot as well as other features of the text. The participants were rather reluctant about the application of this strategy because the texts they have to be competent about are far from stories and novels, but they are more about scientific literature. But still the cycle was started.

The properties of this strategy were studied on six texts but it was not found interesting enough. Some of the participants mentioned that it could be fruitful to use this strategy on some of their articles. This idea helped continue the strategy three more classes. In the following classes two participants claimed that examining RSSS would be efficient if it was applied on the appropriate texts, which are stories and novels.

In the ninth week it was time for the fifth cycle, in which the inferencing strategy would be studied on. Inferencing involves obtaining statements in general. It includes a lot of elements that should be used while examining. Some of these elements are linking the relations between the lines, examining the pictures in the text, if any, as the participants find opportunity to use the visual features, and inference the meaning of the words in a text. When it was started in the first class, the first reaction was that it was quite similar to summarising. In the second class of this cycle some of the participants explained this strategy necessitates a good potential of knowledge and comprehension of English, which they did not have. It is a matter of time.

Since the inferencing strategy includes visual elements it was not found interesting enough. One other reason why it was not found attractive was that it includes guessing the meaning of words and phrases, and the participants believed they were not ready for it, therefore they wanted to keep away from this strategy.

In inferencing strategy one does not have to see the details in a text, but in the exam the fact that they would have to realise the details is very essential. This reality also led to the reason why the participants did not quite appreciate it. After two weeks of studying the inferencing strategy a perception questionnaire was performed again. They reported similar ideas that they explained in the classes, recorded in the daily observations. They felt it was rather difficult, and also something they could not make use of in exam. Following these comments of the participants this cycle was completed, as well. And it was time for the sixth cycle and the sixth strategy.

The sixth strategy of this study was Main Idea Strategy (MIS), which involves finding the author's most important target, which is the topic sentence, when the author writes the text. When a reader tries to comprehend a text his/her main purpose is to catch the main message, which the author would like to deliver to the readers. The core aim of MIS is being skilful at finding the message. About the Main Idea Strategy there were both positive as well as negative opinions. In order to find the answers of the questions in the exam the participants take it is pretty crucial to determine which sentence is the topic sentence, which is most often the main idea. It facilitates the analysis of the text.

Some participants criticised it for two reasons: (i) it may not be always easy to find the topic sentence; (ii) the answers are not always directly related to the topic sentence but more about the details.

The strategy was studied for two weeks, which was the eleventh and twelfth weeks of the study. The texts were analysed in detail and the topic sentences were determined in many texts. The more the strategy was studied the more it was appreciated, but still some of the participants were not satisfied enough due to their anxiety about the exam. At the end of the second week of the study on MIS a perception questionnaire was applied and an exam was made again. In line with the information the participants gave related to MIS, it was a suitable time to change the cycle again. Because it was understood that the participants did not feel they took advantage. A other

reason why they wanted to start to the next strategy, which was also the last strategy, was that the name of the next strategy was question-answer reading strategy (QAS).

As was mentioned above the second exam was made in order to see the developments of the study. This exam, also, consisted of the questions that had already been used in the previous exams of SSPC. The result was successful and the mean grade of the exam was 49,78 with the highest grade being 74, and the lowest 24.

The last cycle of the study was the question-answer reading strategy (QAS). The participants were given information about QAS and they were told about its purpose. Another point specified together with the participants was the source we would study. It was important because the level of the questions was crucial for the participants, after all their first purpose was studying for the exam, and therefore they wanted the questions to be at the convenient level. They were made relaxed about the level of the questions, as we decided a book which they knew to be suitable for their study. The name of the book is "Reader at Work 2", which is a publication of METU (Middle East Technical University). And we started the last cycle in the last three weeks of the study.

QAS was a strategy appreciated by the participants in general. The book used in the class was a book containing questions but as most of the questions in the book were not multiple-choice the participants were a bit reluctant to study at first. The name of this strategy was quite effective on the participants because they knew they would answer questions at the end of the study. Some of the participants said when they focused on the points related to answers of the questions they missed the general plot of the text.

QAS was not found contributive to language skills, however to point out in general the participants came to the conclusion that this strategy was quite efficient for reading comprehension. This can be based upon two reasons: One is the fact that it improves scanning the text and the other is that it facilitates finding the answers to the questions. About the difficulty or ease of the strategy in question it was said that it is not difficult to apply, nor does it have a complex studying system.

The participants were quite motivated when they studied the QAS because studying on the questions relieved them. Many texts were analysed in this three-week process and a lot of questions were answered. Some of these questions were multiple-choice, while others were in different patterns. No matter what the type of the questions

were, the participants were focused since, they mentioned, they improved how to look for the answer of a question in the text and, meanwhile, while searching for the answers they also examined the structures, learnt new words by heart and battered the comprehension. The last perception questionnaire was performed when QAS was over, as well. From the perception questionnaire it was realised that QAS was the way they appreciated to study.

The last exam of the study was done at the end of QAS. This exam was a pack of the questions from SSPC source, and the number of the questions was 80, which was the same as the exam to be done on the 7th of April, 2013. The mean grade of the last exam made was 53.33, with highest grade 76, and the lowest 38. As QAS was the last strategy and it was the end of the study the participants were interviewed related to the whole process.

3.3. Participants and Setting

The participants in this study were a total of 9 agricultural engineers, composed of four females and five males, studying English for academic purposes. The participants' ages were, in average, thirty two. The engineers work at an Agricultural institution. They were given a course of 15 weeks in order to get a score in English by taking a test, FLE (Foreign Language Exam). This test is essential for their academic career. The test comprising of 80 questions of different forms aims at measuring reading comprehension level. The test provides percentage scores out of 100.

At the beginning of the study the participants were asked why they needed to learn and study English apart from taking FLE (Foreign Language Exam). The answers obtained were different. Some of the notions are listed below:

- reviewing the literature
- writing an article
- understanding the presentations
- making presentations
- e-mailing
- reading newspapers
- translating

In their studying process the participants had to go through a high-quality altitude of reading process. The participants all had a certain level of English having studied at diverse environments, such as prep-classes, private courses, or private classes etc. Their levels of English ranged from elementary to pre-intermediate level at the beginning of the study.

The study, in which all the participants confirmed and participated voluntarily the action research, was applied to the group in a way as a kind of project. It consisted of seven cycles, which were changed according to critics coming from the participants' evaluations and the teacher's observations. The study went on successfully through all the action research cycles.

As mentioned above the participants work as agricultural engineers. They study English for several purposes such as having to take an exam which is indispensable for their academic work and career, reviewing the literature pertaining to their job and following the developments, resources, and publications written in English, which are related to their field, taking part in the international activities and so on…

Many engineers work in this institution but only nine of them were a part of the study. There was only one class, whose English level, exam grades, and comprehension level was close to each other. In the study not only one specific publication was used but several different resources were utilized.

The study was mainly based upon having a score in the SSPC exam, to increase the reading comprehension level, and to build a good level of vocabulary. Throughout the study assessments were done at regular intervals through exams of SSPC standard exams. The results of those exams were analyzed via Friedman test in order to check whether they were significant.

The process of the study lasted 15 weeks and the final exam was the one conducted by SSPC on the 7th of April in 2013. The exam consists of several sections and all are aimed at measuring the reading comprehension level and the potential of the vocabulary. The study started with a level-determining examination in order to have information about what levels of the participants were and if their levels were close to each other or not. The average of their grade was 37.6 points, with the highest point being 49.0 and the lowest 20.0.

The interviews, daily observations, SSPC (OSYM) questions, the perception questionnaire were used to collect information about the usage of the strategies, to make the participants use the strategies so that they can become competent on them and improve their reading skill.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

Instruments used in this study include the perception questionnaire, OSYM specific questions, daily observations, and the interview. The perception questionnaires (PQ), in general, are designed to investigate the different ways that people think about themselves and other people, things and subjects. In order to obtain the participants' opinions in this particular study a questionnaire was developed, as well, and it was adapted from critical incident questionnaire. The questionnaire prepared is as follows:

1. What was the most interesting point about the reading strategy of this week? Why?
2. What was the least interesting point about the reading strategy of this week? Why?
3. What was the most beneficial aspect of the reading strategy of this week? Why?
4. What was the least beneficial aspect of the reading strategy of this week? Why?
5. What was the most complex point of the reading strategy of this week? Why?

(see Appendix 1 for Turkish version of the perception questionnaires).

The first two questions ask about the participants' most interesting point of the strategies of the very week. The next two questions aim at whether they find the strategies beneficial or not and the last question aims at revealing whether they find a certain strategy complex or not.

The questions above were asked at the end of each strategy used in the 15-week study. They aimed at obtaining information about each strategy practised. The ideas, approaches and thoughts of the participants were very crucial for tha study. The questions included in the PQ were all in the superlative form so that the participants would not be directed to any expected target.

At the beginning and end of each month of the study the participants who were getting ready for the exam in the science form of Foreign Language Exam (FLE) were applied an original exam that had already been used by SSPC (Student Selection and Placement Center), and which the participants had not answered or studied on before. These exams sought to measure both the reading comprehension level of the participants and what level they were at in terms of the exam.

The target of the first exam was to gain an idea regarding whether all the participants' beginning level was close to each other and at what level they were before the study (see Appendix 2 the exams of SSPC applied in the study).

During all the classes of the study the participants shared their feelings and thoughts. These thoughts were also about any part of the study. For instance, their considerations pertaining to the strategies themselves, the texts read in the classes, the questions answered, and the level of exams.

Occasionally the participants explained their opinions upon being asked questions but sometimes they discussed about the study without being directed any question. All the happenings and developments were noted during the study process. The information obtained, in general, were parallel to the one gained from perception questionnaire and interviews.

One purpose of the study is to find out the learners' perceptions about reading strategies. Daily observations contributed to a great extent to come to a conclusion in this sense. By way of these observations and noting the participants reflecting their ideas day by day, it was possible to have the chance of learning their perceptions about reading strategies. Some perceptions were positive, while sometimes the participants pointed out negative opinions. Thanks to their sharings, it was also possible to decide whether it was a convenient time to change the cycle or not.

Daily observations, furthermore, provided us with learning if the participants achieved any competences from the reading strategy in a certain cycle. Sometimes the participants clearly explained a strategy appropriate for their purposes of reading and sometimes it was quite the opposite.

A huge amount of social science research is fulfilled through interview data. In this study the same method was used in order to gain more personal evaluations in addition to other data collection procedures. The interview was carried out through

seven open-ended questions, which aimed at seeking to obtain further evaluations of the ideas dealt with in the perception questionnaire. The interviews were conducted in the participants' native language, and audio-recorded. Seven main questions were asked to the participants. The questions were:

1. Do you think that it is useful to read a text, using a reading strategy?
2. Do you think that it is useless to read a text, using a reading strategy?
3. What are your general ideas about reading a text, using a reading strategy
4. What positive sides have you regarded in reading through a reading strategy?
5. What negative sides have you regarded in reading through a reading strategy?
6. Of the reading strategies we used in the classes which one did you appreciate best? Why?
7. Of the reading strategies we used in the classes which one did you appreciate least? Why?

The interviews including the questions above were conducted with all nine participants at the end of the study in order to provide qualitative support and explanation. By doing so, the aim was to have an overall understanding of view of the participants pertaining to the reading strategies used during the process. (see Appendix 3 for Turkish version of the interview questions).

At the interview, the replies that the participants gave to the questions provided a lot of useful information. For example the participants told about the competences they gained by way of using the reading strategies. One other result obtained was, like daily observations, the learners' perceptions related to reading strategies.

When interviewing to the participants the role learning style was learned. The participants gave infrmation about how their reading style was affected by using the strategies. From the interviews it was also hoped to find which strategy favoured most through the last two questions by asking which strategy they appreciated best or least. Upon their answers it was pretty clear which participant favoured which strategy most or least.

The interview consisted of 7 questions, whose purpose was to obtain comments, opinions, and approaches of the participants. All the participants joined the interview

and the information gathered was pretty beneficial. All the interviews were audio-taped and analysed through content analysis. The content of the first two questions was if it was useful or useless to read using a reading strategy. One other question aimed at finding their general ideas about the strategies. The next two questions inquired about the positive and negative sides of strategies. And the last two questions asked about the participants' most and least appreciated strategy/ies. In general the responses given by the participants were similar to the findings obtained from the other data collection tools, which are quantitative data, which were SSPC standard exam and other data collection instruments.

At the end of the process the participants took the exam that they would on the 7th of April in 2013. In the exam in question the mean grade of the participants was 37.61, which was rather low compared to the exam made during the study, but in this exam the SSPC quite increased the hardness level of the questions in exam. It is possible to see that the mean grade of all examinees in Turkey was much lower than any other exam that had been made until that date (see the following table 3).

Table 1 The averages of the scores taken by the students having taken in the FLE (Foreign Language Exam)

	The number students having taken the FLE	The average grades
2013 SPRING FLE	289.219	30,461
2012 FALL FLE	91.028	37,067
2012 SPRING FLE	133567	43,623
2011 FALL FLE	90104	39.484
2011 SPRING FLE	107436	41.620

The participants, therefore, were not disappointed with the result because they told that they improved how to study an English reading text and how to approach a passage.

3.4.1. Reliability of Data Collection Tools

Several data collection instruments were used during the process: SSPC (OSYM) exams, daily observations, perception questionnaire, and interview. Interviews were carried out with the participants one by one and they were audio-taped. They were done in Turkish in order that the participants could feel comfortable. The exams employed to determine the level of the participants were original ones especially for the aim of reliability. The exams were made every month. In order to evaluate the level between exams and their significance, Friedman test was used. The daily observations were saved at the end of each class so that they would not be forgotten and be kept in a regular way. The perception questionnaires were applied when each strategy was over. They were also well-kept and filed in order to make use of the information to be obtained.

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

The data collection procedure for this study started in November, 2012. At the beginning of the study participants were first informed that they would be part of an action research project and they agreed it. The students participating in the course were involved in the action research project. In other words, the participants in the action research had a focal role in this study.

For the present study both quantitative (via the results of exams of SSPC) and qualitative (via the interview, the perception questionnaire, daily observations) data were collected. The data collected during the action research cycles was detailed and oriented to the action research purposes and also contained the participants' extensive feedback reports. Triangulation, the use of multiple data gathering methods, was employed during the action research project.

The process started with a specific exam of SSPC (Student Selection and Placement Center) so as to determine the beginning level of the participants in reading comprehension. The process of data collecting went on with several materials. These materials included, as mentioned above, the exams of SSPC, Perception Questionnaire,

Daily observations, and Interview. Depending on these data, some alterations in the course of the study process were made.

The SSPC exams were applied once a month. The last one was on 7th April. As for the perception questionnaires, they were applied when each strategy was over. The participants shared their overall opinions about the reading strategies. During all the classes of the study the participants' feelings, thoughts, observations, critics, and appraisals were noted. The overall data collected during the project included audio-taped recordings at the end of the study, as well.

The interviews were carried out to gather in-depth information in relation to the research questions. The interviews were conducted in the native language (*i.e.* Turkish) so as to enable a comforting atmosphere for the participants. The students were interviewed individually and the whole interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants. The interviews were conducted in Turkish and each lasted about 5 minutes. The students' comments were later used in order to triangulate quantitative data with students' qualitative statements.

Finally, some quantitative data were gathered from the real exam made by SSPC. These data were used to assess the effect of strategy-study, as well. When compared with the previous exams the mean grade of SSPC exam was quite lower but the difficulty level of that very exam, as is known through the average statistics (see table 3) affected the grades of the participants.

3.6. Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

The present study is based on both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was obtained through the SSPC exams, while qualitative data was picked via the daily observations, the perception questionnaire, and the interview.

When the study was initiated and at the end of every month during the study process, an exam was given to the participants. The questions used were the standard SSPC questions of the previous years not having been answered by the participants. In accordance with the mixed style of the study, the daily observations were kept regularly, which means after all the classes. The perception questionnaire was applied after each

strategy was ended, and an interview was conducted as a complementary unit at the very end of the study.

In the following titles the details about all these instruments are explained.

3.6.1. Perception Questionnaires

Descriptive analysis describes the main properties of a set of data, and the aim is the data. It is used to describe crucial characteristics of data in a study. In the present study data collection tools were based upon the descriptive materials. For instance the perception questionnaires and daily observations were examined and analysed descriptively. The perception questionnaire (PQ) was an important data collection instrument in this action research study. This study relies, also, upon the researcher's observations. The questionnaire was concentrating on making clear ideas of the participants via, especially, superlative question forms. For the collection of data they were of utmost importance and use. They were also pretty beneficial for the steps of the study. According to the answers obtained from the participants in the perception questionnaire the alteration or continuation of the strategies could be decided.

After each PQ was applied, very clear ideas were obtained. The participants gave clear answers as the structures of the questions were suitable. These answers directed the process of the study. The answers to the questions were analysed descriptively through content analysis. The answers aimed at finding information about the competences achieved.

A crucial data collection instrument in this action research study was the perception questionnaire (PQ). As is known the PQs are aimed at obtaining the participants' opinions and thoughts related to a subject.

In this study we made use of a questionnaire which was directed to making clear ideas of the participants via, especially, superlative question forms. For the collection of data they were of utmost importance and use. They were also quite beneficial for the steps of the study. According to the answers obtained from the participants in the perception questionnaire the alteration or continuation of the strategies could be decided.

The five questions in this perception questionnaire are as the following:

1. What was the most interesting point about the reading strategy of this week? Why?
2. What was the least interesting point about the reading strategy of this week? Why?
3. What was the most beneficial aspect of the reading strategy of this week? Why?
4. What was the least beneficial aspect of the reading strategy of this week? Why?
5. What was the most complex point of the reading strategy of this week? Why?

(See Appendix 1 for Turkish version of the perception questionnaire).

After each PQ was applied, very clear ideas were obtained. The answers were clear-cut because of the structures of the questions. These answers gave ideas to the researcher about making a mind whether to use a strategy for the study or not, which participant needed what kind of strategy, what points of the strategies were complex, what were their advantages, what was interesting and what was boring about the strategies.

The information obtained through the perception questionnaires were assessed via content analysis and the questions aimed at finding the most favoured reading strategy. All in all for a general assessment of the strategies the usage of PQ was indispensable and a great deal of information was gained thanks to it.

3.6.2. Daily observations

In order to save every minute of the study, including the recommendation, critics, approvals, and similar opinions in detail, daily observations were taken down. Sometimes they were written in class, and sometimes after the class was over, and even sometimes at any time of the day. These notes were based on two different points, one of which was the participants' ideas and the other the researcher's observations.

The participants occasionally explained and shared the considerations upon being asked questions but now and then they expressed what they thought by themselves as they were well aware of the fact that both they were studying and preparing for an exam, as well as being the participants of an action research study.

For the process of the study the daily observations were of utmost importance since the alterations were upon the necessities established through the daily developments. All the notes were taken down on paper with their date and time.
When analysis of the data was carried out the notes were most crucial, in addition they were quite beneficial and helpful for the completion of the perception questionnaires and interviews. When the themes of the action research were formed the daily observations were benefitted to a great extent. The daily observations were analysed through content analysis and they aimed at finding results for the learners' perceptions about reading strategies, and the competences they achieved.

3.6.3. The interview

Among the data collection instruments was also an interview consisting of 7 questions aiming at gathering up the comments, opinions, and approaches. The interview, which was conducted with all nine participant engineers, supplied very crucial information to be used for the study. The questions consisted of the following items:

1. Do you think that it is useful to read a text, using a reading strategy?
2. Do you think that it is useless to read a text, using a reading strategy?
3. What are your general ideas about reading a text, using a reading strategy?
4. What positive sides have you regarded in reading through a reading strategy?
5. What negative sides have you regarded in reading through a reading strategy?
6. Of the reading strategies we used in the classes which one did you appreciate best? Why?
7. Of the reading strategies we used in the classes which one did you appreciate least? Why?

The first two questions are directed at gaining information whether the participants think the strategies are useful or useless. The third one aims at learning about their overall opinions related to the strategies. The fourth and fifth questions endeavor to get information about the positive and negative aspects of the strategies.

And the last two questions have the target to make information about the most and least favorite strategy each participant appreciated.

The students' responses to the interviews were consistent with the findings from the quantitative data, which were SSPC standard exam and other data collection instruments. All of the participants stated that the strategies were useful and they would use them in the future, but justified their ideas with different reasons.

All the conversations were audio-taped. All the records were analyzed through content analysis and they were very beneficial in the obtaining and determination of the themes. Besides, through the interview it was made possible to gather data towards the role of learning style in reading strategy.

3.7. Content Analysis

As one of today's most extensively employed analytical tools, content analysis has been used fruitfully in a wide variety of research applications in information and library science (ILS) (Allen & Reser, 1990). Qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a particular text. It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner. Qualitative content analysis has been defined as: "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278).

When transcribing interviews, the following questions arise: (1) should all the questions of the interviewer or only the main questions from the interview guide be transcribed; (2) should the verbalizations be transcribed literally or only in a summary; and (3) should observations during the interview (e.g., sounds, pauses, and other audible behaviors) be transcribed or not (Schilling, 2006)? Messages have to be unitized before they can be coded, and differences in the unit definition can affect coding decisions as well as the comparability of outcomes with other similar studies (De Wever et al., 2006). Therefore, defining the coding unit is one of your most fundamental and important decisions (Weber, 1990).

Qualitative content analysis allows you to assign a unit of text to more than one category simultaneously (Tesch, 1990). Even so, the categories in your coding scheme should be defined in a way that they are internally as homogeneous as possible and externally as heterogeneous as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

According to Titscher et al. (2000), content analysis is "the longest established method of text analysis among the set of empirical methods of social investigation" (p.55). According to Babbie (2001), content analysis can be defined as "the study of recorded human communications" (p.304). It is "essentially a coding operation," with coding being "the process of transforming raw data into a standardized form" (Babbie, 2001, p.309). In fact, Ryan and Bernard (2000) see content analysis as one of the "major coding traditions" (p.780). But even before that, different approaches to analysis and comparison of texts in hermeneutic contexts (e.g. Bible interpretations), early newspaper analysis, graphological procedures and even Freudian dream analysis can be seen as early precursors of content analysis (Mayring, 2000a, [6]). According to

Gillham (2000), the "essence of content analysis is identifying substantive statements—statements that really say something" (p.71, original emphasis). Berelson (1971) defined content analysis like this: "Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (p.18).

In the present study the qualitative data analysis is based upon three data collection tools. One of them is the observations made in the class which were taken down day by day in the course of the study. The participants were asked their opinion about the reading strategies. The second tool in this way was interview, in which seven questions were directed to the participants and the interviews were audio-taped and then converted into the scripts. The last qualitative tool was the perception questionnaire. It was applied at the end of the cycles so as to obtain participants' clear approaches and thoughts related to each single strategy.

At the end of the teaching process these three tools were analysed in terms of their content by classifying the words, phrases, and meaning. The explanations and opinions which were linked to, and close to each other were grouped and themes were obtained. By way of these themes the participants' approaches to the reading strategies were obtained.

The interviews, perception questionnaires and daily observations were examined in detail. Similar expressions were categorized. As a result of the grouping, both positive and negative themes were acquired. The positive themes are “useful, interesting and not-confusing”, while the negative themes are “not-useful, not-interesting and confusing”. The participants expressed all the themes together with the reasons. In the following tables are the themes related to all the strategies studied.

3.8. Limitations of qualitative content analysis

According to Titscher et al. (2000) content analysis will always be used if communicative content is of greatest importance. The procedures of qualitative content analysis seem less appropriate, if the research question is highly open-ended, explorative, variable and working with categories, or if a more holistic, not step-by-step ongoing of analysis is planned (Mayring, 2000b, p.474, 2000a).

When using qualitative content analysis in action research, one should be aware of the fact that "[r]eplicating a mixed-methods package […] is a nearly impossible task" (Jick, 1979, p.609).

3.9. Analysis and Comparison of the Strategies

In this action research study, the usage of seven strategies was realized. These strategies were summarizing, main idea strategy, inferencing, annotating, annolighting, answering the questions, recognizing story structure.

The reason why the number of the strategies used in the study stemmed from time availability. The time span that the study could go on was restricted due to the exam which the participants would take at the end of the study. We tried to utilize as many strategies as possible; however, the participants recommended practicing more and more on each strategy, and therefore seven of them were completed.

The strategies used were:

3.9.1. Summarizing

As Buehl state "students identify and condense most important aspects of a reading". In this study this stratgey was selected and used because it is accepted to provide a potential of writing, and learning words by heart.

The beginning of the study was made with summarizing. Afterwards, upon the recommendations and considerations taken from the participants, it was realized that the utilization of the strategies would also be functional for the exam.

3.9.2. Main Idea Strategy

This strategy was preferred for the domination of the texts in the exam as the participants need the main idea of the paragraphs when they read the ones in the exam. It is related to an overall comprehension of any kind of reading passages. "An important part of understanding main ideas is being able to “read between the lines,” or to use inferential thinking (Boudah, 2012)."

3.9.3. Inferencing

It was chosen for the betterment of guessing the meaning of the words, or the vocabulary as well as improving to find out the connection between the lines of the texts. Text comprehension should be able to account for the generation of inferences when readers create a model (Graesser and Clark, 1985)

3.9.4. Annotating

It can be claimed that annotation is the widest inclusive reading strategy among the ones utilized in this very study, as it is connected to everything about reading, re-reading, examining, repeating and answering the questions of the text. In order that the participants can obtain an extensive point of view about any written text they should be well aware of the annotating strategy. For this purpose this reading strategy was a part of the study. As Conley (2008, 85) stated "to be in college and in the workplace, one

will need to master cognitive strategies for reading where texts not always clearly understood."

3.9.5. Annolighting

Annolighting is one of reading strategies to improve reading ability. Teacher can apply this strategy because it enables students to become active to search ideas or information from the text (Harley, Adam. 2003). Annolighting strategy is only one part of the annotation. It is only commenting about a text, in other words it is about making thoughtful annotations. It has benefits but it was compared to annotation strategy and remained weak against it, and therefore it was not well approved by the participants.

3.9.6. Answering the Questions

This strategy is directly related to the exam and, in a sense, it was a must-apply strategy in our process. It is inevitable inasmuch as it includes more than one strategy, such as inferencing, identifying main idea, annotating and so on. Frase and Schwartz (1975) found that answering questions while reading significantly increased scores on post-test items and comprehension level.

3.9.7. Recognizing Story Structure

Recognizing story structure reading strategy was a part of the action research study, as well. This strategy is directed to examining the text in several aspects like setting, characters, and theme, and therefore it well helps the readers make a meaning, which is vital for the participants both for exam and improving the comprehension level. Pearson and Duke (2002) summarize the components of effective comprehension lessons as follows. You must be sure to:

- Provide a description of the strategy and model it
- Use the strategy in action
- Guide to use the strategy
- Allow an independent usage

3.10. Strategy Training Materials

The strategy training included both the study for exam and enhancing the comprehension level and it was also strategy training. Therefore, in this study strategy training required a follow-up practice as well. The materials, needed for this practice, were provided by the researcher after reviewing the related literature and establishing the necessities of the exam to be taken. They were adapted and arranged so that they were presented in a clear and easily understandable way.

Practice with the strategies applied was of great importance because it was hoped that it would help participants go on the use of them and generalize beyond the instructional setting. In order to achieve this target, some exercises and reading passages were prepared for the classroom use. The materials used were retrieved from books and different internet sources, and they were either used the way they were, or adapted for classroom use so that they included enough context clues to allow the participants.

3.11. Attitudes towards the strategies

In this action research study seven strategies were taught to the students, whose aim was to enhance the comprehension level. It was a process of strategy training in which one other target was to prepare for an exam that required a pretty high level of reading and vocabulary. The strategies used in the study, of course, were new to the participants. When the study was going on the participants commented about the procedures, the properties of the strategies, advantages and disadvantages of them, positive and negative aspects, appreciation, critics, and etc.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1. Presentation

This chapter is based on the results of analysis of data collected with the perception questionnaire, interview, daily notes, and SSPC exams. The reactions related to the strategies as well as the observations regarding the classes in this research action study are shared in this chapter. The participants' attitudes towards the strategies were used in the study. Results of the data are also the other focal points included in this part of the study.

4.2. Reactions of Participants

This study included seven cycles, in each of which a strategy was studied. Following is the list of each cycle and which strategy was studied in each one:

Cycle 1: Summarising
Cycle 2: Annolighting
Cycle 3: Annotating
Cycle 4: Recognizing Story Structure
Cycle 5: Inferencing
Cycle 6: Main Idea Strategy
Cycle 7: Question and Answer

Through different data collection tools such as perception questionnaires, observation, and interviews the participants' reactions and considerations pertaining to the cycles, namely the strategies, were obtained. Here are the reactions that the participants reflected in the course of the study:

4.2.1. Cycle 1: Summarising

Her are some ideas shared by some of the participants about summarising:

"We learn the vocabulary more permanently."

"Summarizing helps improve writing articles."

"Determining the important points of the text is made more easily through the study of summarizing strategy."

"It gives the feeling of producing something, and thus creates happiness in language learning."

"The vocabulary becomes more permanent."

"If I improve summarizing, after a while I believe I will be able to write articles."

"It will be useful for determining the important points of the text, and therefore it will be beneficial for the exam we will take."

"I feel like I produce something and I feel happiness, accordingly it motivates me more."

4.2.2. Cycle 2: Annolighting

"It is not essential to study it more than one week as it is not quite distinctive from annotation."

"It might be beneficial as it improves focusing on a certain part of the text."

4.2.3. Cycle 3: Annotating

"It is easier than summarising because it is not compulsory to write sentences."

"It is useful as it improves answering questions, which is appropriate with our aim of studying English."

"It betters making a meaning from the text."

4.2.4. Cycle 4: Recognising-Story-Structure Strategy

"I think we had better concentrate on the texts related to the exam, rather than novels and stories."

"I am not very willing to study on a strategy pertaining to stories."

"Examining the texts very deeply, as involved in RSSS, may improve the competence of finding the details of the texts."

In the third class of the cycle one participant said this strategy could contribute conversation skills because it is more appropriate for the stories written in colloquial language.

"This strategy is useful for literature."

"It is suitable for long term story examination."

Another participant said if she had enough time to analyse the novels this strategy would be great.

4.2.5. Cycle 5: Inferencing

The participants said the fact that inferencing is a strategy which involves a previous knowledge makes it an un-preferable strategy because they do not have enough potential knowledge. One of them mentioned his words as follows:

"It is a matter of long time, which we may not have enough in this certain process; hence it may not be suitable for us."

Two other participants in the class said that inferencing strategy could be useful for those who read for pleasure or who needed just a general conclusion, but it is not something we can take advantage of. One participant, whose level of English was good, said a different perspective:

"When I guess the meaning of the words and it is true I get very happy and motivated to study."

4.2.6. Cycle 6: Main Idea Strategy

For main idea strategy, the participants stated both positive and negative ideas. Some of the clear opinions they pointed out were as follows:

"Being able to find the most important statement of a text in English is quite satisfying."

"It facilitates to comprehend the text if you are able to determine the topic sentence."

"As the exam is not only about finding the topic sentence, it may be beneficial to study for comprehension."

4.2.7. Cycle 7: Question and Answer

Some of the opinions explained related to QAS by the participants were as follows:

"I liked this strategy very much because when I study it I believe I will be successful in exam but reading and comprehension do not consist of only answering questions."

One participant pointed a distinctive idea and said that when he searched the text for the answers of the questions, he also had a possibility to see the details, in other words he found is useful.

Regarding answering-questions-reading strategy it is possible to state, dependent on the participants' expressions, that it provides the individual with focusing on the true points of the texts and therefore establishing the core of the information, creating more motivation, and decreasing individual's anxiety against the texts.

The participants stated about summarizing that it also led to different competences, as well. For instance one general opinion was that it constituted permanency in the participants' knowledge of language. Another competence achieved through summarizing was expressed to be bettering the creativity.

Regarding recognizing story structure reading strategy, it was mentioned that it develops text analysis and supplies domination on the reading passages, as well as it provides someone with the ability of detailing the text.

Annotating was thought to be simpler than summarising and because it eases finding the answers of a text the participants approached it in a positive way. Related to annolighting strategy it was mentioned that it might be beneficial and since it was quite likened to annotating it was not found fundamental to learn and waste time on. For inferencing strategy the participants considered that it requires quite a long time and therefore it is not motivating enough. But for those who have enough previous knowledge it is worth improving. The participants put forward both positive and negative ideas related to main-idea-strategy. For instance, it was mentioned to be satisfying as it enables finding the most crucial sentence of the text. However, it was not found useful for the exam study and hence the participants did not quite feel happy with it.

A distinctive idea about the usage of strategies, which was adopted by almost all the participants, was that if the strategies are absorbed well they can save time for the individual. All in all the usage of strategies in reading contributes to making advantages and they are affective which supported by Baker, Brown, and Palinscar's (1984) belief which says that in first language studies, the usage of reading strategies has been figured out to be effective in bettering readers' comprehension.

At the end of the present study process the participants would take an exam, composed of 80 questions and conducted by SSPC institution of Turkey at regular intervals. This exam is crucial in Turkey for those aiming at academic career and for certain institutions. The participants of our study were to take it, as well. Inasmuch as this exam measures, especially, the reading comprehension level of the readers we wanted to utilize the results of the exam scores as an instrument and wanted to make use of them whether their scores would increase after the usage of the strategies.

In the process of the study four exams were conducted by researcher, and they also took one, done by SSPC institution. The first one of the four was to establish their beginning level and the other three were aimed at measuring the rising level, if any? Comparing the mean scores of the exams and assessing them through Friedman test

indicated the result that reading through the strategies affected the mean grades of the participants positively.

4.3. Analysis of the SSPC exams (Friedman test)

In the process of our action research study five exams were applied to the participants. One of them was at the beginning of the study and it aimed at determining the level of the participants in two terms. The first one was their level of comprehension and the other was their grade in accordance with the exam. Three of the next four exams were made at the end of every month which was approximately coherent with the time of completing a strategy and beginning a new one. The last one was a real exam made by SSPC on the 7th of April. In Appendix 2 you can find the links of the exams applied to the students.

Table 2 The scores taken by the students during the study

	Exam 1	**Exam 2**	**Exam 3**	**Exam 4**	**Osym real exam (7 april)**
Participant 1	**49,0**	**52,50**	**42,00**	**57,50**	**41,00**
Participant 2	**44,0**	**50,00**	**36,00**	**45,00**	**53,00**
Participant 3	**43,0**	**42,50**	**62,00**	**50,00**	**28,00**
Participant 4	**38,0**	**22,50**	**52,00**	**57,50**	**47,50**
Participant 5	**37,0**	**37,50**	**60,00**	**49,00**	**39,00**
Participant 6	**30,0**	**40,00**	**74,00**	**54,00**	**20,00**
Participant 7	**20,0**	**37,50**	**24,00**	**38,50**	**50,00**
Participant 8	**41,0**	**62,50**	**38,00**	**52,50**	**20,00**
Participant 9	**36,0**	**45,00**	**60,00**	**76,00**	**40,00**
Average	**37,60**	**43,33**	**49,78**	**53,33**	**37,61**

Table 2 indicates all the scores that the participants had from all the exams they took. These results are, in a way, an indication of their state in the level of comprehension because all these SSPC exams are relied on the comprehension level.

The scores were assessed via Friedman test. Friedman test is a non-parametric test. It is used to test the differences between groups when the dependent variable being measured is ordinal. It can also be used for continuous data that has violated the assumptions. When you choose to analyse your data using a Friedman test, part of the process involves checking to make sure that the data you want to analyse can actually be analysed using a Friedman test.

Table 3 The assessment of standard SSPC exams

	N	Ẋ	Std. Dev.	Df	X2	P
Exam 1	9	37,6	8,5	4	10,489	0,033
Exam 2	9	43,3	11,3			
Exam 3	9	49,8	15,8			
Exam 4	9	53,3	10,4			
Osym Real Exam (7 April)	9	37,6	12,3			

$p<.05$

On the table 2 all the scores taken by the participants are shown. It is also possible to see the scores in Appendix 5. The significance degrees of the grades were assessed through Friedman test of SPSS. As seen in the table the result is $p<.05$ and the rising level is significant.

The increase in the scores of the participants had almost a regular graphic, except for the of SSPC real exam, which the students took on the 7th of April in 2013. However, the last exam of FLE (Foreign Language Exam) of the institution was an exception in terms of difficulty level. In the table 3 you can see the mean scores taken all around the country.

In order to make sure of the difficulty, the average scores of the last five terms were analyzed and it was found that it was pretty lower than them all. The following

table indicates the averages of the last five terms (see Appendix 4 for the links of averages of the last five FLEs).

4.4. Approvals and Benefits

The participants shared the points they adopted and the benefits they made from the strategies, as well. One benefit they mentioned about annotating is that it was found useful for the exam study. A second benefit was that it might improve making an overall meaning from the text. One participant stated that it would provide looking through a text deeply and increase one's speed in order to find the main idea of the text. It was found both useful and easy by a different participant. A different participant expressed that it would be beneficial so as to find the answers of the questions in the exam. The fact that this strategy is quite useful for the exam study was a common shared point.

Inferencing reading strategy, which is based upon guessing the meaning of the words, was appreciated as most of the participants stated the fact that their biggest problem was vocabulary. One participant said it is a multi-sided strategy and therefore could be hard. Some of the participants were not clear inasmuch as they could not relate this strategy to the exam. It was also found rather comprehensive. It was found entertaining by one participant, for guessing the meaning of the words was like a game. The same participant said that the words whose meanings were guessed truly were memorized by him.

The participants had important opinions for answering-questions-reading strategy. It was quite interesting for them since it could meet the requirements of the exam. This approach was a common one among the participants. To give more details regarding this issue we can state that it can have someone focus on the answers, establish the true point, motivate for the exam, decrease one's fear against the texts and so on.

It is quite possible to claim that the summarizing strategy was the one found with positive sides, and was approved as well was found beneficial. Some of the information given in this way was, for instance, that the participants stated that it created permanency in their knowledge of language. One participant expressed that it

was really instructive and provided the feeling of learning. One more common feature for summarizing was mentioned to be bettering the creativity. Another idea about summarizing was that it quite contributed to increasing comprehension. One participant had a distinctive consideration and pointed out that it was practical, and could be used any time.

For positive aspects of recognizing story structure reading structure, the idea brought about most frequently was that it is appropriate for stories. One participant said that it could quite improve text analysis and supply domination on the text. Another one said that it would be efficient for detailing the text and added it would be excellent to make use it so as to improve daily speech.

From interviews a great deal of information was obtained. Among this information was, also, the appreciation and benefit. For instance, a few participants stated that reading should not be done randomly, and it should pursuit a way, a method, and a target. Only in this way can the maximum benefit be supplied.

One other participant said that the strategies are almost the leaders when you read a text. A different participant mentioned her ideas in this way: “The strategies learned well, absorbed by the reader, and perceived to a high level can save time for the individual.” And one more perspective, which is similar to the others, was expressed in these words: “If you read a text in foreign languages without a leader, you may be lost in a blind street in a sense.”

Upon being asked which reading strategy was the most favorite for the participants, they gave different answers related to their needs of using English in their career, job, and their life. They appreciated distinct strategies. The strategies they preferred are indicated in the following table.

Table 4 The most favorite strategies among the participants

	P*1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Summarising Strategy		√			√	√		√	
Inferencing Strategy									
Main idea strategy				√					
Annotating Strategy									
Annolighting Strategy									
Recognising Story Structure Strategy			√						
Answering Question Strategy	√						√		√

P: Participant

From the table above it can be observed that four of the nine participant engineers approved the summarizing strategy best, three of them found answering question strategy most favorite for themselves, one appreciated main idea strategy, and one participant engineer preferred recognizing story structure strategy. Thanks to the information obtained through the interviews analyzed via content analysis it was made possible to determine the most and the least favored strategies among the participants. The same data collection tool provided the role of learning style in reading strategy preference.

Since each reading strategy has a unique feature and specific peculiarity and as each reader, as seen in the participants of this study, has various cause to read leads to the different preference of the strategies. In the following figure the percentage of the preferences among the participants is indicated. We can see the most favored strategies of the seven ones applied in the study.

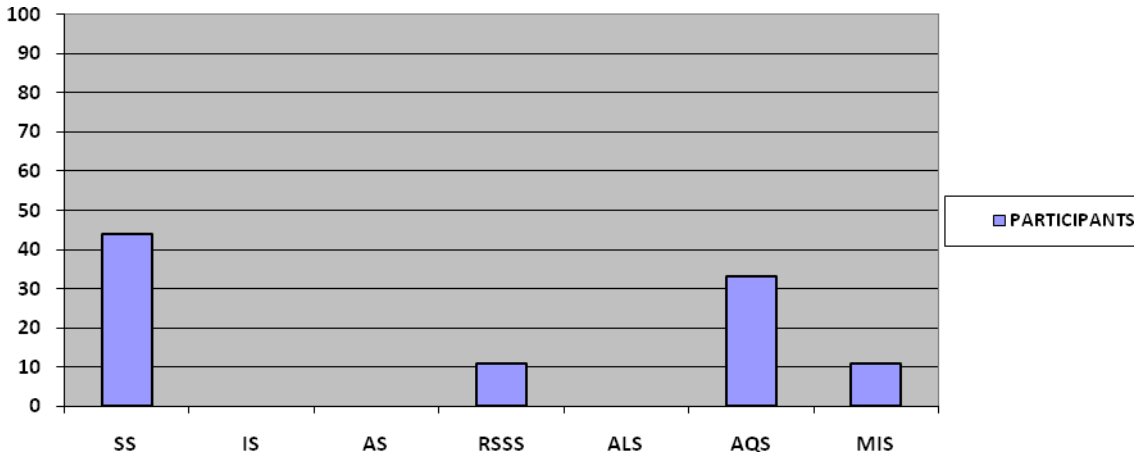


Figure 1: The most favorite strategy among the participants

As can be seen in the above figure 44 % of the participants find summarizing the most favored. The percentage of AQS, which is the second most favored, is 33 % and follow MIS and RSSS, and their percentages are equal, being 11 %.

4.5. Critics

During the study process some critics were made. Some of the critics were the same about the strategies, while naturally some others were quite different.

About annotating reading strategy, for instance, some points were not found integrated, and complexity level was thought to be rather high. The fact that the same strategy was not beneficial for pronunciation was another critic towards this very strategy. Some participants shared their anxieties about the exam they would take at the end of the course. As annotation is difficult in terms of establishing the most important aspect of the text, it may not provide an important use. One participant stated that the reader might get lost in the text. Another participant found this strategy rather trying and irritating.

Pertaining to inferencing strategy it was found to have negative sides, as well. For example, like annotating, it was established to be bothersome. One participant was not sure whether he could use it in the exam. One different point this strategy was not found useful was the visual materials that were required but could not be used in the classes.

Regarding the answering questions reading strategy, I dare say, as the participants prepared for the exam and as the name of this strategy contained the words question and answer it was overall regarded positively. But there were few critics, such as it could lead to a fruitless reading style since reading was not limited to answering questions. It was not found complex because they had studied in this way before.

One participant mentioned that it was likely to miss some points of the text while concentrating on the answers of the questions. This strategy was criticized in terms of not improving the language skills in general. One other critic was distinctive and the participant, who brought it about, stated that it was not interesting for her because we studied on classical questions but they would answer multiple-choice questions in the exam. One point was in common for almost all participants. They expressed that focusing on the answers could give rise to missing a certain extent of comprehension of the text.

As for the summarizing strategy, the approaches were, most of all, positive, nevertheless, it was criticized, even if few, in some points. To share the examples, needing to read a text several times before beginning to summarize was found time-consuming. At the beginning phase of this strategy, some participants were in the opinion that producing sentences would almost be impossible, as they had not studied in that way but later on they got rid of this idea. Indeed the time-consuming aspect of this strategy was the anxiety and critic in common.

It is also worth dealing with recognizing story structure reading strategy. As regards this strategy it is quite possible to claim that all the critics were almost the same and it was towards the point that the reading texts that they should have read were not compatible with the ones that would be coherent with recognizing story structure reading strategy.

Participants shared their ideas about strategies through interview, too. They had, naturally, both positive and negative opinions. Some of the critics worth talking about are given here. For example, one participant pointed out that he did not quite appreciate annolighting as he found it complex. One other participant expressed that he did not like the same strategy since it was too simple compared to annotation which was found more comprehensive.

In the following table the least favorite strategies are indicated:

Table 5 The least favorite strategies among the participants

	P*1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Summarising Strategy									√
Inferencing Strategy					√				
Main idea Strategy		√							
Annotating Strategy						√		√	
Annolighting Strategy	√		√				√		
Recognising Story Structure Strategy				√					
Answering question Strategy									

P: Participant

From the table above it can be realized that one of the nine participant engineers disapproved the summarizing strategy, one disapproved inferencing strategy, two of them found annotating far from themselves, three of the participants quite disliked annolighting strategy, while one participant disliked recognizing story structure strategy.

Likewise, if a reading strategy does not meet the needs of a reader, just as can be realized in our study process, s/he wants to keep out of and does not want to use it anyway. We realized disapproval as well as approval of the strategies in the study course the following figure shows the percentage of the least favored of seven strategies used in the study.

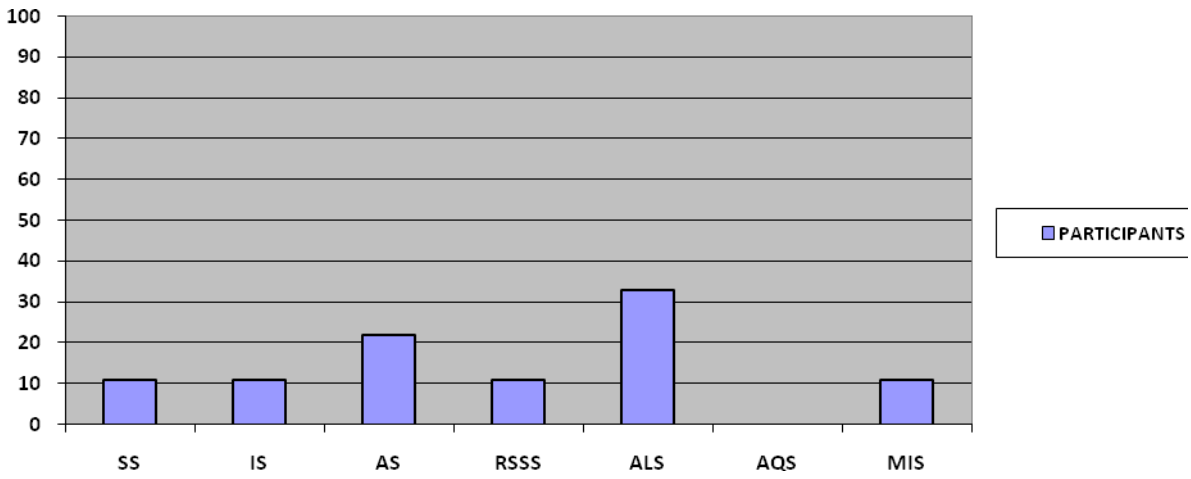


Figure 2: The least favorite strategy among the participants

As can be seen in the above figure the least favored strategy applied is ALS having a percentage of 33 %. It is followed by AS, which has a percentage of 22 % and then come SS, IS, RSSS, and MIS with percentage of 11 %. There is one strategy which was not found disapproved and it was because of the participants' preparing for the exam. This strategy is answering the question strategy (AQS). It direct addresses the wishes of the participants.

From the content analysis both positive and negative aspects appeared together and both aspects have reasons. As can be observed from the above tables for summarising strategy, for instance, it was stated to be useful as it provides creativity and improves the speed of comprehension as well as it is possible to catch the meaning better. Besides, it was found interesting because of creating permanence and it was not found confusing, being quite clear in terms of learning. Inferencing strategy was pointed out to be interesting because it was said to be funny to study it. For MIS the participants expressed that it is quite useful and interesting since it facilitates the analysis and finding the topic sentence is impotant for them. Annotating strategy was found useful because it facilitates obtaining general meaning and provides motivation. The participants expressed that is not interesting, nor is it confusing, for they only have to study a certain part of the text and it is easy to study. For RSSS they, in general, told that it improves analysis skill and provides dominancy on the text and therefore it is useful and interesting. As for the last strategy, answering the questions, because it is

directly related to finding the answers it was considered interesting, and it was found clear enough to study.

Table 6: The positive themes obtained from the study of the strategies

	Summarising Strategy	**Inferencing Strategy**	**Main Idea Strategy**	**Annotating Strategy**	**Annolighting Strategy**	**Recognising Story Structure Strategy**	**Answering Questions Strategy**
Useful	-Creativity -Improves speed -Catch the meaning	-	-Facilitates analysis	-Obtaining general meaning -Motivation	-	-Improves analysis	-
Interesting	-Permanence	Funny	-Finding the crucial statement	-	-Studying certain part of the text	-Provides dominancy	-Finding the answers
Not-confusing	-Clear	-	-	-	-Easy to study	-	-Clear

There were also negative aspects that the participants told about the strategies. For example the not-interesting aspect of summarising was linked to the fact that it requires reading the text too many times and it is rather time-consuming. They thought that inferencing is not useful, nor is it interesting as it requires huge potential of previous language knowledge and it is rather demanding. The same reason was also stated for MIS and it was found confusing because it is hard to find the topic sentence. Annotating was found not-useful in terms of providing no permanency, and as it is quite likely to miss the details it was not considered it was not considered to be interesting. Annolighting strategy was thought to be interesting as it was quite similar to annotation. The participants considered that RSSS is not useful and not-interesting due to the fact that it is appropriate for novels and stories, but in this study the scientific texts were always analysed because of the exam they would take. And for answering questions they considered it to be not-useful and not interesting as it is possible to miss the details and it does not improve the general comprehension.

Table 7: The negative themes obtained from the study of the strategies

	Summarising Strategy	**Inferencing Strategy**	**Main Idea Strategy**	**Annotating Strategy**	**Annolighting Strategy**	**Recognising Story Structure Strategy**	**Answering Questions Strategy**
Not-Useful	-	-requires huge potential		-no permanency	-same as annotation	-novels must be studied	-Missing the details
Not-Interesting	-reading too many times -time consuming	-demanding	-demanding -	Missing the details	-nothing new	-ineffective on scientific texts	-not improving general comprehension
Confusing	-	-	-hard to find the topic sentence	-	-easy	-	-

4.6. Recommendations

At the end of the study, the participants had some advices. Particularly they pointed out their ideas in the interview. One important example was that it s pretty crucial to employ a strategy and it will be more suitable to determine which strategy to use based on the need of the reader/learner.

Another recommendation was about applying the strategies in a program not having the anxiety of having to take an exam at the end of the study, because sometimes the worrisome about the exam to affect their career was a big obstacle for the study of strategies.

A different participant stated that the fewer the number of the strategies used in the process the better results it would lead to. One other participant agreed with him and added that the fewer number would give chance of more examples in terms of applying and practicing the strategies so that we could have a much better depth.

4.7. Additional opinions

During, and after the process of the study the participants pointed out and reflected their thoughts and opinions via different ways. These ways, which were used

as the most important data instruments, included, for instance, interview, daily notes perception questionnaire and so on. There were both positive and negative aspects. Some of these opinions were recommendations, critics, and approvals. But besides these considerations were also several separate ideas. Following are some outstanding examples, which were directly quoted from the participants' words at different times of the study process:

"*The strategy should be based upon the reader's need."*

"If strategies are used and practiced for longer time it will be quite more effective."

"Strategies are time-consuming at the learning phase."

"They feel complex initially but later, you get accustomed to."

"A reader has to use a strategy appropriate to his/her needs of reading."

"I was a bit afraid when we first started because I thought it might be an obstacle for my exam study."

4.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the results of analyses of the strategies, analyses of the data instruments, attitudes towards the strategies as well as the data collected through tests. The results were presented in two quantitative data analysis, qualitative data analysis.

This study investigated (a) whether reading through reading strategies affect the comprehension level, (b) what competences are achieved through using a specific reading strategy, (c) whether there is a significant difference in the exam scores of the readers after they study via reading strategies, and (d) what the role of learning style in reading strategy preference is and what the most favored reading strategy is.

In addition to the analysis of daily notes kept during the study process, interviews that were applied at the end of the study and the perception questionnaire which was carried out between the cycles, the results of the pre- and post specific exams were also presented in this chapter.

In the following chapter, the major findings of the study will be dealt with related to the literature review.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The findings that were presented in Chapter IV will be discussed in this section with regard to the research questions of the study.

5.1. Discussion and Conclusion

According to Hasbun (2006) reading is of great importance, reading skill is at the heart of education and it is rather hard to be successful, because they do not have the skill to read well and good comprehension level. Without being in contact with reading, it is possible to claim, nothing gets forward in the formal education, nor is it possible for the academic world. No achievement is likely to gain in an environment of academy. If an individual has an aim towards being successful, it is a must, first of all, that s/he is a skilled, good, and regular reader.

For language learners, perhaps, it is more inevitable to be in interaction with reading. Reading is crucial for other skills and without it, it would not be quite available to achieve. Carell (1998) cites that second language readers cannot have a good performance without having a comprehensive degree of reading.

In academic environment the importance of reading cannot be denied and it has so many reasons. In order to make it clear, it will be useful to give an example such as the fact that without reading learning cannot be carried out. Another reason is the fact that a good level of reading accelerates the speed of learning. Grabe (1986), in brief, summarizes this idea as reading is learning.

In our study it has always been observed, being quite parallel to the ideas pointed out by the previous researchers, that a regular reading process and particularly the one applied in accordance with specific strategies leads to a great success in the reader. We realized that a strategic reading style also affects the concentration level. In this sense Snow (2002) believes that if we want to develop reading comprehension and keep it, we are to enhance individual's concentration. In order to better the

concentration, a reader is to have the information of how to use the true way, which is made easier via the usage of strategies as cited by the participants of our study during the process.

Research indicates that for the readers, learners, or students reading comprehension is crucial, it affects the understanding of the texts and provides them with answering the questions truly, which is a necessity for the study processes. To ensure the perception level of the texts, now and then, teachers ask extra questions to the students but it may not be enough every time. The usage of the reading strategies is essential. Vaughn and Linan (2004) support this opinion; they believe that the best way to improve literacy is to directly teach comprehension strategies.

From the information given above related to the strategies, in other words the participants' reactions emerged the information about the learners' perceptions on reading strategies. The participants' reactions also revealed information over the competences they gained through the study. In the following lines it will be quite possible to realize the examples.

In the present study seven strategies were studied on and the data were collected through PQ, DO, and interview. Important information was gained in terms of participants' making benefits or competences through the above mentioned data collection instruments. Participants shared their ideas in this sense in various times through different instruments. Naturally, every strategy does not have the user gain the same competence. Each has different features and supplies the reader with different competences.

In the related literature strategies are found to be acquiring many uses, competences, and skills and they are defined in that way as in the definition of Oxford and Crookall (1989) which explains strategies as learning techniques, behaviors, problem-solving or study skills that make learning more effective and efficient. It is a pretty consistent definition with the present study. According to Rigney (1978) second language readers must use strategies since they are beneficial in terms of acquisition, learning, and gaining of information.

During our study, it was brought about by the participants that annotation improves making a general meaning from the passages. In a study, Carrell (1988) searched the effects of strategies about the text structure of a text and established that

using strategies to identify text structure help readers remember the text better both in terms of main ideas and the supporting ones.

As to inferencing reading strategy, relied upon predicting the meaning of the words, it was commonly said by the participants of the present study that it facilitates guessing the true meaning of the words, which is a big problem among the language readers. This result is quite parallel to Cohen's (1990) view that suggests using effective strategies results in better reading performance is supported by research evidence. A research conducted by Cohen (1990) indicated that the readers who were educated in terms of the usage strategies on word guessing became more effective problem solvers when coming across unknown vocabulary.

Reading strategies are the devices which are directly connected to understanding. The aim of their usage is to have the utmost level of comprehension. The concept of reading strategy is almost identified with making a meaning from the text. In our study process we observed that the participants always remembered the word understanding when they heard reading strategy. These expressions are consistent with Block's (1986), Pritchard, and Whitehead's (1994) definitions of reading strategy, which are comprehension strategies, reading processing strategies, and literacy strategies.

According to many a reading specialists reading is an interactive process. Widdowson, for instance, (as cited in Dubin et al., 1986) says that reading is a communication between the reader and the passage. The reader interacts with the text in order that s/he can make a meaning because every reader's mental process is different (Bernhardt, 1986; Rumelhart, 1977). In this interaction, the readers' variables such as interest level, purpose for reading, previous knowledge, foreign language skills, and awareness, and text variables such as the type of the text, structure, syntax, and vocabulary) defines the comprehension level (Hosenfeld, 1979), and the usage of strategies affect some points in the reader as a result of this interaction. Sometimes positively and sometimes negatively but if a reader establishes a true strategy, which is appropriate for his/her needs, it gets very efficient. In our study most of the participants approved the summarizing and question-answer strategies and they stated that they strengthened their willingness of reading, aroused the stimuli of reading because these strategies made them feel that they learn.

In the present study one of the data collection instruments was interview and one other was perception questionnaire. The participants shared their opinions in both instruments and said that by using the strategies individual one has an aim or a purpose and therefore, in a sense, does not read in vain or vaguely. This result can be attributed to Smith's (as cited in Dubin et al., 1986) approach in which he handles reading as a purposeful, meaningful, and comprehending course of time. This way of reading directs the reader and the reader knows where to go and what the destination is.

In our study we observed that the level of the text, the style, and the reason for reading are crucial, otherwise the reader wants to get rid of the reading process. One strategy we used was recognizing story structure reading strategy. This strategy is directly related to the reading of stories and novels. In our action research study process we only focused on the academic texts and hence this strategy did not address to the participants' requirements. Finally it did not make a good result. In the class when the issue of reading stories was discussed for the usage of the strategy in question, it was declined, and affected the motivation badly as it was far from the target. In the reading comprehension process the true target a key point. This reality can be attributed to Devine & Eskey's (1988) belief that the reader cannot obtain the full meaning, s/he is not quite interested in the material or the content is not appropriate for the target.

A chief result we made at the end of the process was that reading through the strategies is a kind of leadership for the readers. Thanks to their usage, in a way, the reader can find the way. S/he knows where to go, how to, where to stop. In our study the participants stated these opinions several times in different ways. For example one participant expressed that when read vaguely, without reading a strategy he felt in a blind street. This point of the study can be ascribed to Duke's (2003) definition of navigation for the comprehension. Duke also believed that readers could find the way, evaluate the exactness, and reach at a self-selected location at the end. These definitions can also be attributed to Oxford and Crookall's (1989) approach of reading strategies. They state that strategies are techniques, attitudes, analytic or learning skills.

Cohen (1990) suggests using effective strategies results in better reading performance. In our study we saw similar conclusions and the participants who studied through the appropriate strategy have better results in many respects such as increasing

the exam grades, being more motivated towards reading, having the feeling of learning, becoming better problem solvers, being more proficient readers, and so on.

Paris et al. believe that reading strategies are the answers to four main problems, one of which is about intentionality and consciousness. In our study we found that utilization of reading strategies solves this problem and the reader finds a way in order to obtain a point of view towards the text and gains consciousness.

During the study process it was well established that using reading strategies is a need. This is reality that cannot be ignored and it is well consistent with Paris (1991) reasons for the usage of the reading strategies. These six reasons are : (a) students can assess information in the text, (b) reading strategies contribute learners to better the cognitive strategies and they are essential to increase attention, (c) through strategies students can control aid comprehension, (d) strategic reading affects motivation, (e) strategies can be taught directly, (f) strategic reading facilitates knowledge throughout the curriculum by heartening free and self-directed learning.

In our study seven different strategies were used and they were assessed in terms of finding the answers to the questions such as whether their usage affects the comprehension level, what competences are gained thanks to them and so on… At this point of the discussion it will be of use to deal with the strategies individually. For instance summarizing strategy was found to pretty useful in the study process by the participants. They said that summarizing developed their writing skill, helped memorize the words, and helped make their own sentences. Those conclusions can be attributed to Egen and Kauchak (1992). They believe that summarizing supports students in many aspects like: 1) reading purposefully, 2) determining important points, and 3) creating the sentences with his/her own words. Thanks to summarizing strategy the learners learn which key words and points they are to focus on. Egen and Kauchak's opinion that learning how to summarize takes a great deal of time and requires application a set of strategies is quite a similar conclusion as our study, which was pointed out by the participants of the action research. Summarizing strategy was established to have many benefits, and therefore it might be recommended to teach it to the students and readers as supported by Murrel and Surber (1991) as teaching summarizing to students is a very important endeavor. Their opinion is pretty equivalent to the present study.

About annotation we can say it helps see the structure, analyze the text as indicated in Conley's (2008) definition. In his definition he cites that annotation helps students communicate understandings, realize construction, examine ideas, and draw meaning from the text. In the related literature we learn that if annolighting is done well it can become a very effective reading tool. But in our study it was found complicated and not efficient enough.

The readers of second language do not always have the same reason to read. As it was also observed in the present action research study the participants had distinctive targets such as improving writing skill, examining the literature linked to their own academic field, translating, following the related publications, having to take the SSPC exams and similar aims.

Research Question 1: What are the learners' perceptions about reading strategies?

Routman (2003, 51) defines reading comprehension strategies as "procedures for reducing the hardness level and bettering comprehension". Reading comprehension strategies can contribute readers to keep the key points in mind, separate the necessary information from the unnecessary, consider about the key points and have an idea about the subject matter. Good readers take advantage of lots of strategies during all the stages of reading (Dogan, 2002). In this study it was established that a reading strategy, which is suitable for reading purposes of the reader, facilitates the comprehension level and speed. This finding is well appropriate with the related literature. Through the content analysis it was emerged that the participants are of the idea that the strategies improve speed, create permanence in the information studied, facilitate analysis, provide motivation, and ease obtaining the general meaning of the text. Within the new literacy contexts, readers use strategies to facilitate their meaning-making process for both their first language (L1) and L2. In other words, they employ strategies to make their reading more efficient and effective regardless of their language level (Oxford & Crookall, 1989). In many first language studies, the use of various strategies has been found to be effective in improving students' reading comprehension (Baker and Brown, 1984; Brown, 1981; Palinscar and Brown, 1984). This statement is a conclusion appeared in the present study. The participants of this study pointed out clearly that it is pretty

effective to study through reading strategies. For inferencing strategy, for example, it was stated that when the meaning of a word is guessed truly it helps increase motivation. In the related literature Cohen (1990) believes that the learners who received strategy instruction on word guessing became better problem solvers when encountering an unknown word.

Research Question 2: What competences are achieved through using reading strategies?

Strategic reading facilitates learning throughout the curriculum by encouraging independent and autonomous learning (Paris et al., 1991). The strategic patterns differ, however, for each person and context. In the present study the conclusion obtained was that the readers can comprehend the text independently on condition that the suitable strategy is employed. In the process of this study the participants mentioned that strategic reading helped them gain different competences, though these competences were not the same with all of them. Dependent on the participants' level of English, learning style, background with English, and the type of text the participants read they achieved different competences such as creativity, improving to catch the meaning better, facility in analysis, and motivation. These conclusions are quite suitable with the literature. A great amount of related literature states that strategic reading provides readers with competences.

Answering-questions reading strategy enables the readers to center on the factual points of the texts and hence the reader can create the core of the information, and create more motivation. This decreases individual's concern. In the process of the summarizing strategy it was realized that it supplied different competences such as permanency in the participants' knowledge of language and improving the creativity. Regarding recognizing story structure reading was established to develop text analysis and supply domination on the reading texts as well as providing the ability of detailing the text. For annotating it can be claimed that it facilitates finding the answers of a text. In our study it was also determined that main-idea-strategy makes it possible for the readers to discover the most crucial statement sentence of a text.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant difference in the exam scores of the readers after they study via reading strategies?

The exam that the participants of this study prepared is called Foreign Language Exam (FLE), held by Student Selection and Placement Centre (SSPC) twice a year, and the academicians take it for their academic purposes. The exam, which consists of 80 questions, include the sentences and texts that the students have to comprehend fast and well. In other words, a better reading performance is entailed in the exam. In the process of this study seven strategies were taught to the participants and one of the purposes was to determine whether learning the strategies affect the comprehension level and thereby increase the grade level in FLE. Four exams were made during the study and at the end of the study the participants took the exam of SSPC on the 7th of April 2013. The results of the exams were assessed via Friedman test and a significant difference was found between the exams, except for the one that they took on the 7th of April. However the exam in question was rather demanding and the mean grade of exam takers all around Turkey was too low. The average grade in Turkey in FLE exam was 40 until April 2013, while in this term it was 30,461. Considering the imbalance in the mean grade, it can be claimed that there was a significant difference in the exam scores after they studied. This aspect of the strategies is consistent with the literature. For instance, research evidence suggests that efficient reading is not only determined by proficiency in the target language but also by effective use of strategies (Carrell, 1988). Strategies are known to be learning techniques, behaviors, problem-solving or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient (Oxford and Crookall, 1989). Research in second language reading suggests that learners use a variety of strategies to assist them with the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information (Rigney, 1978). The view that suggests using effective strategies results in better reading performance is supported by research evidence (Cohen, 1990).

Research Question 4: What is the role of learning style in reading strategy preference?

This study covered a process of 4 months in which an action research was executed and there was an active interaction with the participants in the study. In the course of the study seven different strategies were studied on and it was realized that not every participant or reader prefers the usage of the same strategy. This depends on the readers' purpose of reading and therefore different participants appreciated in distinct strategies. For example four out of nine participants stated that they found summarising strategy quite consistent with their learning style, and thus they preferred summarising. Besides, three out of nine participants mentioned that answering questions strategy was quite appropriate with their learning style and hence they preferred answering questions strategy. This conclusion is quite parallel to the literature as in a second-language study, Hosenfeld (1977) used a think-aloud procedure to identify relations between certain types of reading strategies and successful or unsuccessful readers appeared at the end of the study. Various other studies in the area of reading strategies have found that younger and less proficient students use fewer strategies and use them less effectively in their reading comprehension (Garner, 1987; Waxman and Padron, 1987).

Research Question 5: What is the most favored reading strategy?

Based on the previous research question it was also obtained from the study that the readers may have a favored strategy, and the most favored strategy depends on the readers' purpose of reading. It can be observed from the related literature, as well, that the preference of a strategy is a multi-sided aspect. As a result the most favored strategy is distinct from reader to reader. In this action research study it was determined that summarizing strategy and answering questions strategy were found to be the most favoured ones among the seven strategies used. The former of the two strategies was found quite favoured as it creates permanency, provides finding the important points of a text, improves writing etc. In the literature similar points are possible to review. For instance, Egen and Kauchak state that summarizing reinforces students in many aspects. Some of them are: 1) reading meaningly, 2) establishing important points, and 3)

creating the contents with his/her own words. In this way the learner uses these principles, brings the information together, and makes it meaningful. Thanks to summarizing strategy the learners learn which key words and points they are to focus on. However, learning how to summarize takes a great deal of time and requires application of a set of strategies. As for the latter strategy, it was quite appreciated by the participants because it develops the skill of answering the questions and promotes determining the crucial points of the text. This aspect can be seen in the literature, too. Raphael (1984, 1986) studied the question-answer relationship, a taxonomy broken into four levels: Right There, Think and Search, the Author and You, and On My Own and he claims that this strategy promotes active comprehension of the message of the author and provides students with a way to think about questions and answers.

One conclusion that was obtained through this study is that the reason why different readers may favour different strategies is the fact that they may read texts with different characteristics such as novels, journals, articles and so on. In other words, different texts may entail the usage of a different strategy. In the literature it is available to review this aspect. Strategies are employed differently because the unique nature of each text requires readers to modify strategies to fit the demands of the text (Duffy, 1993). If strategies are conscious actions that can be controlled by readers, they are used selectively and in combination (Carrell, 1998; Paris et al., 1991). In this sense, a skill can become a strategy if it is employed deliberately.

5.2. Implications for Readers

The implications drawn out to form a scientific basis for readers can be outlined as follows:

- Readers are to be well aware of the material and the characteristics of the material they read.
- Consciousness about the reading strategies and particularly the suitable one for the purpose of reading is crucial for the readers.
- Studying reading strategies was confirmed to promote FLE.
- The role of learning style is essential for the preference of strategy.

- Being directed to a specific strategy gains competences to the readers.
- Strategic reading is functional in promoting the reading skill.

Through these conclusions, future readers will be aware of the importance of reading strategies through their studies.

5.3. Implications for Teachers

The present study emerged some crucial points to be presented to language teachers:

An important part of the job language teachers do is to teach to teach students reading skill, which is an inevitable part of language learning process. In order to be successful, as a conclusion of this study, they are to make the readers aware of the reading strategies. In this way the readers will not only be successful but also be more motivated to reading.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Research

Bearing in mind the limitations of the study, it is possible to make some suggestions for further research. Firstly, since the study was conducted with a limited number of participants, another study could be carried out with a larger number of participants. Secondly, the findings of the present study are limited to the students at Zirai Mücadele (The Institution of Agricultural Affairs) in Diyarbakir, Turkey so further research could be done in another setting.

Furthermore, the present study examined the effect of strategies on only the students preparing for the SSPC exam; therefore, another study could deal with students from different proficiency levels.

Another recommendation for further research is to conduct a similar study with students belonging to different age groups and educational settings. For instance, students can be selected from secondary schools and high schools, and their reported use of reading strategies can be compared to see whether reported use of reading strategies are related to age group and educational setting.

Studying one or two strategies more densely instead of studying a whole collection of strategies can supply better results about strategy utilization. Students can be given different tasks and their use of these particular strategies can be checked besides establishing their performance consequences grabbed from this homework. Therefore, the effect of the utilization of these strategies on students' level in comprehension can be examined.

Considering the time duration of the current study, the effect of strategies could be explored over a longer period of time. In other words, final recommendation for future research is that a replication of this study can be carried out in a longer period with repeated measures. Since students' motivation, reading strategy use and reading habits can change over time, conducting a longitudinal study over a longer period of time would allow the researcher compare the results of two measures, one at the beginning and the other at the end.

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Appendix 1

Perception Questionnaire-Turkish Version

Kritik Olay Anketi

Lütfen yaklaşık beş dakikanızı ayırarak bu haftaki İngilizce dersinde kullanılan okuma stratejisi ile ilgili soruları yanıtlayınız. Zaman ayırdığınız için teşekkür ederiz.

1. Bu haftaki **……** stratejisinde en ilgi çekici olan şey neydi? Neden?
2. Bu haftaki **……** stratejisinde en az ilgi çekici olan şey neydi? Neden?
3. **……** stratejisinin en yararlı olan yönü ne idi? Neden?
4. **……** stratejisinin en az yararlı yönü ne idi? Neden?
5. Bu haftaki **……** en karmaşık veya kafa karıştırıcı nokta veya yön ne idi? Neden?

Appendix 2

The exams of SSPC applied in the study

Exam 1(Level Establishing Exam)

http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/arsiv/2006KPDSMAYIS/INGILIZCE/kpds2006mayisingilizce.pdf

Exam 2

http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/arsiv/2007KPDSKASIM/INGILIZCE/kpds2007kasimingilizce.pdf

Exam 3

http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/arsiv/2006KPDSKASIM/INGILIZCE/kpds2006kasimingilizce.pdf

Exam 4

http://dokuman.osym.gov.tr/pdfdokuman/arsiv/2008/2008KPDSKASIM/INGILIZCE/kpds2008kasimingilizce.pdf

Exam 5 (The Real exam made by SSPC on 7th of April in 2013)

http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-69059/h/ingilizce.pdf

Appendix 3

Interview Questions-Turkish Version

Görüşme

1. İngilizce metinler okurken okuma stratejileri kullanma hakkındaki düşüncelerin neler?
2. Derste kullandığımız okuma stratejilerinden hangisini/hangilerini en çok beğendin? Neden?
3. Derste kullandığımız okuma stratejilerinden hangisini/hangilerini en az beğendin? Neden?
4. İleriki okuma çalışmalarında bu stratejilerden harhangi birini kullanmayı düşünüyor musun? Hangisi/hangileri? Neden?
5. Bu stratejileri kullanırken herhangi bir sıkıntı yaşadın mı? (Eğer evet ise ne tür problemler ve onların üstesinden gelmek için neler yaptın?)
6. Stratejilerin daha etkili olması için öğretmene ne tavsiyede bulunmak istersin?
7. Kullandığın bu stratejiler ile ilgili eklemek istediğin başka birşey var mı?

Appendix 4

The links of averages of the last five FLEs (Foreign Language Exams)

2013 SPRING FLE
http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-69071/h/2013-yds-ilkbahar-donemi-sayisalbilgiler.pdf

2012 FALL FLE
http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-61213/h/2012-kpds-sonbahar-donemi-sayisalbilgiler.pdf

2012 SPRING FLE
http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-60145/h/2012-kpds-ilkbahar-donemi-sayisalbilgiler.pdf

2011 FALL FLE
http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-58845/h/2011-kpds-sonbahar-donemi-sayisalbilgiler.pdf

2011 SPRING FLE
http://www.osym.gov.tr/dosya/1-58846/h/2011-kpds-ilkbahar-donemi-sayisalbilgiler.pdf

Appendix 5

The scores taken by the students during the study

	Exam 1	Exam 2	Exam 3	Exam 4	Osym real exam (7 april)
Participant 1	**49,0**	**52,50**	**42,00**	**57,50**	**41,00**
Participant 2	**44,0**	**50,00**	**36,00**	**45,00**	**53,00**
Participant 3	**43,0**	**42,50**	**62,00**	**50,00**	**28,00**
Participant 4	**38,0**	**22,50**	**52,00**	**57,50**	**47,50**
Participant 5	**37,0**	**37,50**	**60,00**	**49,00**	**39,00**
Participant 6	**30,0**	**40,00**	**74,00**	**54,00**	**20,00**
Participant 7	**20,0**	**37,50**	**24,00**	**38,50**	**50,00**
Participant 8	**41,0**	**62,50**	**38,00**	**52,50**	**20,00**
Participant 9	**36,0**	**45,00**	**60,00**	**76,00**	**40,00**
Average	**37,6**	**43,33**	**49,78**	**53,33**	**37,61**

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