

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT**

**THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
OF YOUNG ADOLESCENT LEARNERS**

Naime PEKÇABUK

MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA / 2019

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MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA / 2019

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bildirir, aksi bir durumda aleyhime doğabilecek tüm hak kayıplarını kabullendiğimi beyan ederim. / / 2019

Naime PEKÇABUK

ÖZET

OKUMA STRATEJİLERİNİN GENÇ ERGEN YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN DİL YETERLİLİKLERİ ÜZERİNE ETKİSİ

Naime PEKÇABUK

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Hasan BEDİR

Şubat 2019, 66 sayfa

Bu çalışma a) Süreyya Nihat Orta Okulundaki 57 sekizinci sınıf öğrencisinin okuma stratejisi kullanıp kullanmadığını b) İngilizce derslerine entegre edilmiş açık okuma strateji eğitiminin 27 sekizinci sınıf öğrencisinin okuma stratejilerini kullanmakta bir etkisinin olup olmadığını c) entegre edilmiş açık okuma strateji eğitiminin bu öğrencilerin okuma stratejileri kullanım sıklıklarını arttırıp arttırmadığını d) entegre edilmiş açık okuma stratejisi eğitiminin 27 sekizinci sınıf öğrencisinin Temel Eğitimden Orta Öğretime Geçiş (TEOG) sınavı başarısı ve bu çerçevede İngilizce seviyeleri üzerinde bir etkisi olup olmadığını incelemek için yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma Süreyya Nihat Orta Okulunda 27 sekizinci sınıf öğrencisiyle uygulanmıştır.

Bu çalışma okuldaki İngilizce derslerine açık okuma strateji eğitimi entegre edilmiş bir deneysel grup ve strateji eğitimi entegre edilmemiş alışlagelmiş öğretim modelini izleyen bir kontrol grubundan oluşan yarı-deneysel bir çalışma olarak yürütülmüştür. Veriler hem niteliksel hem de niceliksel veri toplama araçlarıyla toplanmıştır. Bir Okuma Stratejisi Anketi öğrencilerin kullandıkları okuma stratejilerini görmek için çalışmanın başında ve aynı anket entegre edilmiş açık okuma stratejisi eğitiminin sonunda da öğrencilerin çalışma öncesi ve sonrası arasında okuma strateji kullanımlarında bir fark olup olmadığını görmek için kullanılmıştır. Öğrencilerin ders süreçleriyle ilgili fikirleri kısa değerlendirmelerle yazdıkları kağıtların içerik analiziyle değerlendirilmiştir. Anket ve öğrencilerin kısa değerlendirmelerinin bulunduğu kağıtlardan toplanan veriler araştırmacının uygulama boyunca tuttuğu günlüklerle arttırılmıştır. Hem deneysel grubun hem kontrol grubunun TEOG sınav sonuçları entegre edilmiş açık okuma strateji eğitiminin öğrencilerin İngilizce yeterliliği üzerindeki etkisini görmek için hesaplanmıştır.

TEOG sonuçlarını ve anketin niteliksel verilerini analiz etmek için ortalamalar, t-değerleri ve standart sapmalar değerlendirmiştir. Buna ek olarak içerik analizi öğrencilerin kısa değerlendirmelerinin olduğu kağıtlardan veri toplamak için kullanılmıştır.

Çalışmanın başında uygulanan okuma stratejisi anket sonuçları sekizinci sınıfların okuma stratejilerini yeterli olarak kullanmadıklarını gösterdi, ancak, çalışmanın sonunda uygulanan aynı anketin sonuçları deneysel gruptaki 8.sınıfların okuma stratejisi eğitimi boyunca uygulanan okuma stratejilerinin kullanım sıklığında kayda değer bir artış olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğrencilerin kısa değerlendirilmelerinin bulunduğu kağıtların içerik analiz sonuçları öğrencilerin entegre edilmiş okuma strateji eğitiminin İngilizce öğrenim süreçlerine katkıda bulunduğunu göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, deneysel gruptaki öğrenciler TEOG sınavından genel ortalamada daha yüksek bir nota eriştiler, bu sebeple, sonuçlar okuma strateji eğitiminin ve strateji kullanımının deneysel gruptaki öğrencilerinin İngilizce öğrenmelerine önemli bir katkıda bulunmuş olabileceğini göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okuma stratejisi eğitimi, okuma stratejileri, okuma stratejilerinin derslere entegre edilmesi, İngiliz dili eğitimi ve öğrenimi, anlamlı öğrenme, okuma stratejisi kullanma farkındalığı

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF READING STRATEGIES ON LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF YOUNG ADOLESCENT LEARNERS

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Master Thesis, Department of English Language Teaching

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February 2019, 66 pages

This study was designed to investigate whether a) 57 learners from eighth grade in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School apply reading strategies b) integrated explicit strategy instruction into English language lessons have an effect on 27 eighth graders' reading strategy use c) integrated explicit reading strategy instruction increase the level of reading strategy use of those learners d) integrated explicit reading strategy instruction have an effect on the results of the exam named Transition from Basic to Secondary Education (TEOG) and relatedly their English proficiency of 27 learners in the eighth grade. The study was conducted with 27 learners from eighth graders in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School.

The present study was conducted with a quasi-experimental research design as the study was implemented with an experimental group exposed to explicit reading strategy instruction in their regular English classes and a control group following a regular instruction model without applying explicit reading strategy instruction. Data were collected through both qualitative and quantitative instruments. A reading strategy questionnaire was used to find out reading strategies employed by learners and the same survey was conducted after the explicit reading strategy instruction to see whether there is a difference between the pre and post study in terms of reading strategy use. Learners' perspectives were evaluated through content analyze of minute-papers. Data gathered from surveys and learners' minute paper were multiplied with the data gathered from the notes of the researcher's diary that she kept through the implementation. The results of the exam named Transition from Basic to Secondary Education (TEOG) of both control group and experimental group were calculated to see

whether there is an effect of integrated explicit reading strategy instruction on learners' English proficiency.

To analyze the quantitative data from TEOG results and surveys; means, t-values, and standard deviations were evaluated. In addition, content analyses was used to gain findings from students' utterances on their minute paper.

The results of reading strategy questionnaire indicated that eighth graders did not use reading strategies sufficiently before the study, however, findings of the same questionnaire conducted at the end of the study demonstrated that learners in experimental group improved the frequency of reading strategies use, those were instructed through the reading strategy instruction, to a considerable extent. The findings gathered from the content analysis of minute-paper including students' evaluations indicated that integrated explicit strategy instruction promoted their English learning process. In addition to this, learners in experimental group, in the frame of mean value, reached a higher score in TEOG exam and, therefore, findings showed that reading strategy instruction and strategy use seemed to have a significant effect on learners' English language learning.

Keywords: Reading strategies instruction, reading strategies, integration of reading strategies into the lesson, English language teaching and learning, meaningful learning, awareness of reading strategies use.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasan BEDİR for his patience and precious guidance.

I am also grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gülden İLİN for participating the jury and for her precious support and guidance.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Assist. Prof. Dr. Eser ÖRDEM for his valuable feedback.

I would also like to thank Çukurova University as I became part of the university through the study, which turned out to be a priceless experience.

I would also like to thank to my sister Merve PEKÇABUK for her constant encouragement and on-going support.

I am also grateful to my best friend Sanem ÜSTTAŞ for her assistance and contribution to the study.

I owe special thanks to my students for willingly participating in the study, without their participation, it would not have been possible to conduct the research.

Last but not the least I would like to thank my mother, for her love and motivating me to have the most precious job; teaching.

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Naime PEKÇABUK
Adana /2019

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ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

LLS: Language Learning Strategies

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

SBI: Strategy Based Instruction

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TEOG: Transition from Basic to Secondary Education

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Learning with its complicated process and multiple variables has been one of the most significant issues that researchers, teachers and decision makers have been working on throughout the history of education. One of the most important field of education in the globe has become foreign language learning as globalization has been erasing borders and consequently this process has created a multicultural world with the need of foreign language learning. Among other foreign languages, English has become the most common and applied foreign language resulted from the developments in various fields of life such as science, technology, economy, culture and politic. Therefore, people have been in need of learning English to interact with each other in nearly every aspect of life for various reasons such as education, business, face to face communication or socialization via social networks and so on. As a result of that rising need of learning English, educational systems seek ways to provide language learning situations with more effective foreign language learning process. In this context, foreign language learning is supposed to catch up with the needs of learners who belong to the new and changing globalized world. Therefore, new applications, approaches and techniques have become inevitable in the process of language learning and teaching as well.

With relevancy to the current needs of learners, the approaches replacing the learners into the center of the learning process have become increasingly significant since they provide learners more meaningful and relevant learning opportunities through the process of language learning. However, for countries like Turkey where learners have very little chance to practice English in an authentic environment, language learning inevitably remains in the classrooms. Thus, application of new methods in classroom teaching and learning has gaining more and more importance to challenge traditional methods and provide more meaningful learning in the classrooms. Among other skills in language learning, reading is believed to support a crucial source for internalizing the foreign language, especially in the countries where learners have insufficient exposure of English. In this respect, considering English classes in Turkey, it is apparent that language learning is mainly based on reading. Thus, to challenge the

traditional ways of classroom applications and provide learners more fruitful opportunities of foreign language learning through reading instruction have become essential in language learning process.

Beside many other suggested methods, reading strategy use has been considered as one of the effective ways of promoting the language learning process and increasing the benefits of reading in the target language. It is, therefore, inevitable to conduct research to gain a fully understanding of the correlation between reading strategy use and its effect on learners' foreign language learning. Thus, this study aims to shed light on the role of reading strategy use in English language learning process of 27 students in the eighth grade in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School and its possible effects on their English language proficiency in the scope of Transition from Basic to Secondary Education Exam (TEOG) results.

1.2. Background of the Study

In all parts of the world, English is the language preferred mostly as a foreign language and currently it is still the challenging process for learners living in communities where English is not spoken. As a result of this, much research has been done to find out how English is learnt effectively. Earlier research commonly investigated the grammatical and structural forms of the language, however, as the needs of the learners changed and old methods remain insufficient, later inquiries have sought answers to the question of how foreign language can be learnt the best and most effectively. Many of the recent studies conducted on language learning imply that there is no method, which can be solely sufficient to develop language learning. Thus, applying appropriate strategies in the process of learning and teaching foreign language has been thought to be one of the significant options to challenge the possible barriers that learners and teachers have confronted. In this respect, along with many variables in language learning, the impact of reading strategies on EFL learning has been sought.

As mentioned above, over the past few decades, the correlation between the use of reading strategies and its impact on the achievement of learning a foreign language has been investigated in much research. Several research conducted on reading and language learning has pointed out the correlation between reading activities and its effect on foreign language learning process (Taglieber, L.K., Johnson, L.L., and Yarbrough, 1998; Bedir 1998). Moreover, Kembo (1993) emphasizes the role of

reading materials as they assist learners through the process of building confidence and to be involved in English more. Additionally, many research studies conducted on reading have showed that without using reading strategies, learners have difficulties in constructing the meaning. Duffy (2001) supported that using appropriate reading strategies strengthens learners' reading skills and coequally contribute a lot to their reading comprehension.

Regarding learners' use of reading strategies and their effect on reading proficiency, it can be considered as an essential process to focus on strategy instruction. Research conducted to investigate strategy instruction reveals that a strategy-based reading instruction promote effective reading (Phakiti, 2006; Talebi, 2009; Akkakoson & Setobol, 2009; Wichadee, 2011; Alfassi, 2004). Furthermore, Janzen's study (1996) indicated that reading strategy use contributes learners' language learning process in the classroom as they help learners enhance their reading comprehension and create a progression where students are no longer passive but active learners. Similarly, Supancic (1995) points out the importance of teaching strategies during the class learning.

Though much of the research has demonstrated the outcomes of reading strategy instruction on the positive side, some researchers state that students possibly seldom or never use reading strategies to improve their reading comprehension because they have very little awareness or possibly no awareness of reading strategies (Supancic, 1995; Yurdaşık, 2007). Similarly, Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989), Palincsar and Brown (1989) revealed that EFL learners who have little achievement in language learning do not have the knowledge and correspondingly awareness of reading strategies. Some researchers stated that students applying insufficient use of strategies would probably confront more problems that they have to cope with even in their further education (Marentič Požarnik & Mihevc, 1997 as cited in Jurkovic (2011). Thus, their findings suggest that strategy instruction should be applied to encourage learners to avoid their difficulties in language learning process. Looking from the point of students' view, additionally, Geridönmez (1999) observed that students who had strategy training developed positive opinions for the strategy instruction since they realized the benefits of using reading strategies and its contribution to effective reading in English.

It seems that applying reading strategy puts learners' foreign language learning forward. In accordance with that, being aware of the reading strategies and knowing how to use them possibly take an important part in the process of effective learning of

English as a foreign language (EFL). It is, therefore, likely to happen a more beneficial foreign language learning process with supporting reading strategy instruction to promote use of reading strategies.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Ways to provide learners with more meaningful process of learning English has been one of the significant educational issues in Turkey. If we analyze the Turkish Curriculum in terms of language learning, it is observed that students have English subject as a foreign language from primary education to higher phases of education. However, foreign language classes remain as lessons in a school-frame context since learners have very few opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. As a result of this, English can be considered as a school lesson which mainly follows patterns in the frame of course books and exams.

Considering the mentioned situations of English language learning of Turkish students, EFL learners in middle schools in Turkey seem to have difficulties in English language learning when the results of TEOG examination are considered. In Turkey, students at their secondary education attend a high school according to their score in the TEOG Exam, in which there are 20 English questions besides other questions in 5 other school subjects. According to the official data published by Ministry of Education every year, English is one of the subjects in which students get the poorest grades. Therefore, application of new approaches and methods seem to be inevitable to challenge the present situation of EFL.

For many years, a good deal of research has worked on identifying and avoiding the barriers that students experience through their English language learning process. Thus, focusing on developing reading comprehension through strategy use may be one of the possible ways to challenge the traditional way of teaching and learning English in Turkey, where reading comprehension during English classes is most commonly instructed by simply translating the reading texts. Besides, concerning the English Questions in TEOG exam, it is clearly seen that nearly all questions are based on comprehension. (Reading Paragraph: 8 Questions , Reading a Chart: 1 Question, Sentence Completion: 2 Questions, Paragraph Completion:1 Question, Dialogue Completion: 6 Questions, Vocabulary: 2 Questions). It seems that many of the TEOG questions require such skills as reading, comprehension, identifying and analyzing

statements, which are supposed to be the main processes of reading strategy instruction as well. However, it is important to mention that English questions in TEOG exam does not assess speaking, writing and listening skills, which can be considered as the weak side of the TEOG exam, thus content development of TEOG exams has been still worked on.

Consequently, if we consider that learning and using a foreign language corresponds to comprehension skills, it can be expected that students' use and awareness of reading strategies in middle schools may have an impact on improving their reading comprehension, and coequally on their English language proficiency in the frame of TEOG examination and meaningful learning. In this direction, the need for integrating reading strategies through explicit reading strategy instruction may be curicial as Turkish education system is mainly based on reading and examinations, many of which questions require comprehension rather than memorization.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to discover the possible effects of integrated explicit reading strategy instruction on 27 eighth grade students' English language proficiency in the scope of TEOG Examination in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School.

1.5. Research Questions

The questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. Do the young adolescents use reading strategies while reading English before study? If so, what are the least and the most frequently used reading strategies?
2. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction have an effect on the development of reading strategies use of eighth graders? If so, what kind of developments are these?
3. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction increase the frequency of reading strategy use of eighth graders' after study?
4. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction have an effect on eighth graders' TEOG score? If any, in what ways does it affect?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Learning and teaching a foreign language with its numerous variables is a wide field in which many theories and approaches have been put forward and studies have been conducted on. In this chapter, we will review the literature focusing on reading strategy use on foreign language development. However, before talking about reading and reading strategies, it is useful to mention about “*language learning strategies*”- on which reading strategies are based- in order to be able to comprehend the possible contribution of reading strategies from a more expanded vision. Thus, this chapter represents related literature about **language learning strategies, reading and reading comprehension, strategies-based instruction, reading strategy instruction, reading strategies and integration of reading strategies.**

2.2. Language Learning Strategies

The word, “Strategy” generally reminds us the word ‘tactic’ as they are both used for moving toward an aim. However, they differ from each other as strategies include tactics and thus the concept of strategies use is a more complicated and complete process. In relation with the process of language learning process, researchers and experts suggest use of strategies in various aspects. Rubin (1987) defined that language-learning strategies (LLS) take place in the pattern of language learning process where learners build learning through those strategies. She also stated that LLS help learners improve language learning since use of learning strategies promote an effective process of getting, saving and using the knowledge for the learners. Rigney (1978) conveyed the similar idea that learners experience the process of gaining, using and performing various information through the use of strategies. Similar to Rigney’s definition, Wenden (1987) mentions that learning strategies are tools that facilitate learners organize and make sense of the knowledge they are gaining through the process of learning. Similarly, according to Schemeck (1988), strategies are utensils that take a crucial role in completing a task as the application of strategies requires a set of patterns that affect learning on the positive side.

Oxford (1990) defines strategies as a term to refer to achieving a certain goal with its various steps such as planning, taking an action and so on and thus, strategies should be used in language learning process “because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence” (p.1). Additionally, Oxford (1990) defines LLS as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (p.8). From the point of learning process, for O’Malley and Chamot (1990), language-learning strategies are “the special thoughts or behaviors of processing information that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information” (p.1). Similarly, Weinstein and Mayer (1986) defined that learning strategies facilitate learners’ converting knowledge into codes, as learners’ cognition is busy with various operations through the process of learning.

As mentioned above the influence of LLS in the improvement of language learning has created a growing interest among researchers (Fewell, 2010). Cohen (2007) underlined the importance of LLS use as they provide learners operations to direct themselves. According to Oxford (1990), LLS provide learners with more opportunities for self-directed involvement when teacher guidance does not exist. In such case, learners are to achieve their target in learning by themselves. Thus, LLS are very crucial for language learners as they are thought to encourage independent learning in a way.

Consequently, language-learning strategies can be considered as some kind of utensils, which can be used in solving problems or accomplishing goals. In the frame of language learning context, they are regarded as conscious and planned actions taken by the students in order to facilitate and activate the language learning process. Therefore, the impact of language learning strategies on learners’ foreign language seems promotive and beneficial.

2.3. Reading and Reading Comprehension

To understand what reading comprehension is and why it is important in the process of reading, it is better to define the meaning of reading first. After discussing what reading is through related literature, the process of reading comprehension will be discussed by pointing out related literature.

2.3.1. Definition of Reading

Reading is considered as one of the most complicated cognitive process achieved by human beings. In the past two decades, the concept of reading has come into the field of ELT (English Language Teaching) and gained much interest among researchers. Different definitions of reading from different perspectives have been proposed. According to Gates (1949) reading is the process of functioning mind with all phrases of mental process that is supposed to include all kinds of thinking, such as reasoning, solving problem and so on, thus reading can be considered as a process of having higher thinking process with its complicated and ordered versions (as cited in Hoover & Gough, 1990, p. 127). Allen and Bruton (1998) describe reading as a complicated pattern that gets meaning from a text with a variety of purposes and in numerous contexts. According to Goodman (1995), reading is a psycholinguistic process in which it starts with a linguistic representation produced by its author and ends with constructing meaning by the reader. Goodman and Burk (1980) define reading as a problem-solving process with the aim of twofolds, one aim is to try to discover what the author means, and the other is to build meaning for themselves. Consequently, reading itself seems to own various processes and variables in itself, thus, to read effectively and comprehend what is conveyed in the text possibly require more than just reading the lines.

2.3.2. Reading Comprehension Processes

Even though reading can be considered as an observable movement performed by the reader, it requires a mental and inner process in which the reader gets information and meaning from what he/she reads, thus reading does not make sense if the learners fail to understand what is conveyed in the text. Hence comprehension is essential to shift the process of reading from simply following words on a page to getting the meaning from the text. In other words, the reason why comprehension in reading is important is that it can be considered as an important pattern of understanding what you are reading. However, the process of comprehension is not as simple as its definition since it is a combination of various patterns having mental, inner and practical process, which is supposed to start before a reader begins to read and last until he/she finishes reading. Thus, teaching, learning and processing comprehension requires a significant effort to accomplish reading.

Comprehension is considered as the curicial target of reading and thus, aims to construct meaning from reading text by intense involvement in the process of reading (Durkin, 1993). In other words, reading comprehension is defined as a complex interactive patterns operating strategic and cognitive skills through constructing a mental meaning of the text by the reader (van den Broek & Espin, 2012). Thus, comprehension in a way corresponds to effective use of strategic processes. Hence, as readers improve their comprehension skills, they can sustain beneficial processes of learning; the phases from learning how to read to reading for learning purpose, which is considered as the goal of reading. (Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, & Tindal, 2005).

Irwin (1991) proposed a model of five kinds of processes explaining what takes place cognitively in the course of reading. According to her, the phase of building meaning happened at the same time. As mentioned before, those phases are described as five processes including microprocessing, integrative processing, macroprocessing, elaborative processing, and metacognitive processing. *Microprocessing* shifts the focus from vocabulary knowledge to readers' use of syntactic knowledge building on the background knowledge. During microprocessing, selecting is considered as a skill needed while reading since choosing essential units may help the reader remember the complete idea of the text, especially when the text is long. Similar to use of previous knowledge in microprocessing, *Integrative processing* involves inferencing which is related to the reader's previous knowledge and thus progress with the information of connections and order in the sentences such as cause-and-effect relationship and sequence so as to replace information into coherent representation. Thus, readers are able to progress in summarizing, reasoning, inferencing and decision making which put readers' high order cognitive skills forward (Walker & Meyer, 1980).

Macro processing involves selecting important ideas in order to catch the necessary information and grasp the main ideas from the text to use in summarizing (Irwin, 1991). For this, insignificant details are skipped and main ideas including those details are taken into consideration. The reason why it is suggested to identify main ideas rather than details is that learners can improve their ability to understand, organize, remember, and summarize ideas effectively. On the other hand, *Elaborative processing* refers to extending and reasoning of ideas. As some ideas may not be given clearly by the author of the text, readers should be able to go beyond the information given in the text to get inferences. In other words, readers should be able to deduct new

knowledge from the already mentioned information in the text. This process leads readers achieve higher-level comprehension.

As a further step, *metacognitive processing* operates the process of higher-level thinking. It facilitates readers' regulation of reading process by observing and managing his/her reading. Thus it provides readers awareness of how to evaluate and regulate their own reading. Also, as those mentioned five comprehension processes happen at the same time, the processes are interrelated to each other and thus one single process provides a contribution to the function of another and strengthens the effectiveness of each other. (Irwin, 1991). Overall, it seems clear that comprehending a text is an interactive process with relations of the reader's background knowledge, using the information, making inferences and deciding on the main ideas in the text. Hence, efficient comprehension is beyond linguistic knowledge, rather than that it is a process requiring the ability to connect the topic to reader's existing knowledge (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

To sum up, applying reading strategies with its mentioned processes is likely to help learners make progress in language learning since the process of reading seems complicated. Hence, just tracking what is written in the text is possibly insufficient to comprehend any written items. In fact, it requires more than that since the process of reading is thought to have many faces from using background knowledge to making inferences.

2.4. Strategies-based instruction

Without realizing the ways about how to learn and taking part in the learning process, learners seem to have difficulties in language learning process, thus a shift from traditional learning to experiencing different kinds of interventions in the learning process has been risen. One of the suggestions to provide learners more effective learning process is strategies based instruction (SBI), which has been putting the emphasis on developing language learning by using proper strategies effectively. With this realization, the development of SBI began and has been continuously gaining interest since SBI has been considered as an effective way to challenge teacher-led instruction. The reason why SBI is thought to be an alternative to traditional methods is that it aims to provide learners opportunities to be the part

of learning itself with using proper strategies and suggesting the ways about how to learn.

As language learning has been more learner-focused and interactive, there has been an emphasis on second language (L2) learners' active participating in learning process. (Brown, 2002; Chamot, 2001; Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999; McDonough, 1999). SBI seems to be suggested to encourage L2 learners to realize how to organize and use strategies systematically and effectively, thus SBI is thought to give the learners opportunities to experience the process of how language is learnt. Oxford(1990) explains the effects of SBI by defining SBI as a device to help learners to become independent from teachers as they can manage their learning process by applying strategies. Furthermore, Cohen (2011) supported Oxford's ideas by stating that, beside many other benefits of strategies based training, SBI provides learners various opportunities in the process of being autonomous learners and improvements in their learning level. What the researchers have expressed about the benefits of SBI is infact based on the learning theory of *Self-regulated learning theory*. It involves making reflections on one's learning and using strategies in order to ensure effective learning. The process of self-regulation requires using both cognitive (predicting, visualizing and summarizing) and metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating). Thus, it seems that SBI is also supported with learning theories.

Studies conducted on SBI showed the possible effects of SBI on language learning. Researchers like Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto (1989) found out in their studies that SBI had a positive impact on learners' reading comprehension, thus with regard to several research demonstrating the promoting effects of SBI, Grenfell and Harris (2002) state that SBI should be integrated into the regular classrooms so as to develop learner competence and autonomy, which implies implicit application of SBI. However, Chamot (2008) supports SBI as an explicit instruction which should be integrated into the regular instruction. Hence, the application of SBI could be either implicit or explicit but in either way it seems to be the kind of instruction that has been thought to be beneficial and effective. The literature about whether it should be applied implicitly or explicitly is on the side of explicit SBI (Oxford, 2002; Pearson & Fielding, 1991; Pressley, 2000). The reason why it should be explicitly is based on the idea that learners had better be aware of the use of suitable strategies on the right time and in the right place.

To sum up, explicitly or implicitly, SBI seems to challenge the teacher-centered classroom environment since the learners are required not only to gain strategy use but

also to perform as independent learners for their further education. Thus, learning through SBI can be regarded as the combination of various educational aspects of approaches with its facilitative contribution of knowing how to use appropriate strategies.

2.5. Reading Strategy Instruction

Strategic reading instruction has been gaining great interest over the last decade. It is considered as an innovative application of instruction where reading comprehension is improved through use of reading strategies. However, it has been found out that not only teaching appropriate strategies but also knowing when, where, why, and how to apply them is important. Therefore, various opinions have been the subject of debates about what kind of instruction suits the language learning process most.

As mentioned, there are various kinds of reading strategy instruction that are suggested to apply. However, as for the relevancy for the scope of this study, reading strategy instruction is covered from its two main characteristics, which are direct explanation and scaffolding (Harris & Pressley as cited in Sinatra, Brown & Reynolds, 2001). The first one suggests teachers to explain the strategies explicitly with modelling the text to show how and when to use the strategies. Teachers are supposed to use read-aloud or think-aloud techniques to make the steps of strategy use as clear as possible. According to many researchers (Anderson, 1999; Bimmel, 2001; Kern, 1989; Pearson & Fielding, 1991), without awareness of the reason behind why reading strategies are used, a reading strategy instruction may not serve for the purpose of facilitating the learning as knowing why and when to use them takes a crucial role in the instruction period, thus, direct explanation also requires teachers to explain the positive outcomes of applying reading strategies as well as to guide learners about using the right strategy in the right place. Instructors are also required to create opportunities for the learners to evaluate themselves and suggest new situations to apply reading strategies in different contexts with the aim of multiplying learners' use of reading strategy use (Sinatra, Brown & Reynolds, 2001). Hence, direct explanation is considered as an important part of many approaches related to reading strategy instruction, however some of them get use of it less while some more. Thus, considering direct explanation, with its various opportunities for learners to gain awareness of strategy use, as the most common

component of explicit strategy training, the nature of reading through strategy use enhances learners' autonomy (Paris, et al., 1991) in the learning process.

On the other hand, the latter, scaffolding, shifts the focus on students' use of reading strategy use from the responsibility of teachers. (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, Pearson, 1991; Paris et al., 1991). Thus, scaffolding is considered as an important benefit of reading strategy instruction as it facilitates learners' process of directing themselves in the language learning period. In fact, the term scaffolding came from Vygotsky's *Social-Cognitive Theory* which proposes that development is a process that should be analyzed, instead of a product to be obtained. Vygotsky, his **Social Learning Theory**, argues that language development follows the similar pattern with a child's growing period, which means the development process begins at birth and continues until death (1978). He believed that this life long process of development was dependent on social interaction with his/her peers and that social learning actually leads to cognitive development. Vygotsky called this period as "*Zone of Proximal Development*" (ZPD) and described this process as a linking area between what a child determines to do independently and what he/she does with the guidance of an adult. Based on Vygotsky's ZPD, Wood, Bruner and Ross used the word scaffolding in the learning context to draw similarities between the phases of guidance that a child is supported by parents and the process children experience through the development of language (1976). Bruner (1978, p. 19) defines scaffolding as:

"... the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom taken in carrying out some task so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill she is in the process of acquiring".

Significantly, reading strategy instruction follows the correspondent path with what social theory suggests since it aims to help learners use reading strategies with practice, feedback and interactive situations and for further period this guidance decreases until learners become sufficient at using the strategies accurately. Thus, with scaffolding learners are aided by their teachers and interacting with their peers to gain self-regulation and independence about employing the reading strategies without the need of an aid.

Consequently, it is evident that reading strategy instruction is essential for the learners of foreign language as it triggers internal developments of language learning and suggests multiple occasions to improve foreign language learning. Research conducted on the effect of reading strategy use in the first language (L1) and L2 reveal

that reading instruction contributes to the improvement of reading comprehension (Janzen & Stoller, 1998; Barnett; Carrell; Diptoadi; Hamp-Lyons; Lee; Mustafa; Rusciolelli; Spinelli & Sissen; Swaffar; Zhicheng as cited in Mustafa, 1998; Sinatra et al., 2001; Al-Rufai; Barnett; Hamp-Lyons; Hosenfeld; Kern as cited in Young, 1991). Thus, whether it is implicit or explicit, integrated or separate, reading strategy instruction seems to be promotive in the process of language learning.

2.6. Reading Strategies

Knowing all words in the text doesn't always help readers understand what they read. Thus, reading and relatedly comprehension can be challenging for readers. To gain meaningful ideas, they need to develop and apply strategies to comprehend the whole text involving understanding the ideas and making connections between ideas conveyed in the text. Duke and Pearson (2002) suggest good readers use strategies to comprehend text better, such as making connections with prior knowledge, organizing knowledge, asking questions, making inferences, comprehending ideas in the text and visualizing what they read. Hence, the use of effective reading comprehension strategies can be considered as the most important tools to help readers improve comprehension and learning from text.

Related literature suggest various definitions of reading strategies, however, with the exception of slight differences, its common explanation was done by Erler and Finkbeiner. They define reading strategy as "intentional actions chosen to facilitate reading at any level of processing" (2007, p.189). Therefore, reading strategies are generally believed to facilitate the reading comprehension and thus the effect of using them on learners seems beneficial. According to Singhal (2001) reading strategies are employed by learners as the use of them contribute learners' comprehension of the text and make the reading process easier. Similarly, Zang et al. (2008) found out in the study that students with high-proficiency employed reading strategies when they are reading, on the other hand, students with low-proficiency did not practice reading strategies as frequently as the students with high-proficiency to achieve comprehension, rather than that those tried to read the expressions repeatedly to understand the text. As related to Zang et al., Tsai underlined the differences of strategy use between learners. That is to say, readers who are good at reading comprehension employed

strategy use more often than the others, thus others who do not apply strategies as much as good readers do could not reach the sufficient comprehension level (2012).

Overall, the effect of reading strategies seems to be effective to reach a high proficiency in reading and correspondingly in learning. There are numerous reading strategies that are suggested to employ to be a good reader, however, all strategies are in fact adjunct to each other. Thus as Anderson (1991) stated strategies had better not conduct as an isolated pattern rather than that they should be considered as a process. Therefore, in the following section, reading strategies will be viewed according to the process they belong as pre-reading, while –reading and post-reading (Paris et al., 1991; Wallace, 1992)

2.6.1. Pre-reading Strategies

Pre-reading strategies are employed in the process when readers prepare themselves before reading the text. It is, therefore, important for a reader to make arrangements in their thinking process before he/she starts to read. “Pre-reading strategies actively involve students in the themes, concepts, and vocabulary of the text before they even pick up the article, textbook passage, or piece of literature” (Farr, Kopp and Kamras 2010, p.64). Thus, the use of visuals, questions about the themes and brainstorming (Wallace, 1992) may serve for this purpose. As it is seen pre-reading period actually prepares the learner to a deeper understanding of the text for the other phases of reading process. Thus, the positive outcomes of employing pre-reading strategies also trigger reader’s thinking process. As Beers and Kyle define (2003) the strategies employed before reading help readers manage to perform active participation through the reading process. One of the main significance of pre-reading strategies is that they trigger reader’s prior knowledge and help them draw connections with the text. Farr, Kopp and Kamras describe (2010) pre-reading strategies as beneficial since learners focus on activating prior knowledge, which helps learners make predictions and connections. Use of prior knowledge, in fact, based on a learning theory called *Schema theory*, which grounded one’s perception on his/her mental processes. Anderson and Pearson (1998) described schema theory as existing abstract knowledge in one’s mind following a complex pattern of mental structures. Thus, the wider one’s mental perception, the deeper one’s schema is. Nunan also agreed on the contribution of schema theory on comprehension and stated that (1999) our comprehension ability is also

supported with Schema theory which explains comprehending a text with using clues from the text and making connections with the previous knowledge of the reader to reconstruct the original meaning of the writers.

On the basis of mentioned information about schema theory, the role of pre-reading strategies seem to gain greater importance as they encourage readers to use the already existing knowledge to make connections to the text and finally enlarge his/ her schema with the new information. Farr, Kopp and Kamras(2010) explain the pre-reading strategies by saying:

“Effective pre-reading strategies also stimulate students’ prior knowledge about a topic; when the knowledge that we already have in our heads about a topic or a related topic is pushed to the forefront of our minds....” (p.64).

Similar to Farr, Kopp and Kanras, Grabe and Stoller (2001) define that pre-reading strategies activate students’ background knowledge thus, it helps readers to have general information about the text and demonstrate expectations of the learners; attract attention of the students and in a way show strategies for students. In the frame of mentioned ideas above, some suggested strategies that can be applied through the pre-reading process are making prediction from the title, skimming for the main idea (Aurbach & Paxton,1997), having a purpose to read (Chamot, Barnhart, El-Dinary & Robbins, 1999), questions prepared by the reader (Wallace, 1992), pre-questions prepared by the teacher (Wallace, 1992), headings and subheadings, visual materials, short narratives from real life, reading the first and last sentence of the text can be used for getting the main ideas of the text before reading.

2.6.2. While-reading Strategies

In the process of while reading, students are involved in the reading process continually through various tasks such as seeking the answers, getting the main ideas, identifying the difficult parts and so on. Farr, Kopp and Kanras (2010) describe this process and stated that readers had better practice comprehension strategies very often as while reading good readers are observed to employ those strategies such as observing comprehension, linking the relationships and so on. Therefore, the strategies of while-reading are possibly the process when readers apply most of the reading strategies since learners attempt to understand what the text tells through reading the text. While the learners are reading the text, reading strategies encourage learners to concentrate on

various goals such as focusing on difficult parts, seeking answers to the questions, outlining the themes, comparing their predictions made in the pre-reading process to the actual ones in the text, making prediction about what will come next and so on. Consequently, use of reading strategy seems to serve learners multiple purposes requiring progressing strategically through reading.

2.6.3. Post-reading Strategies

Completing the reading text does not mean that comprehension of the text ended. Thus, main aim of the post-reading instruction is to expand what was done in the while-reading process, which aims to help learners write or express the main ideas of the text with their own words, in a way learners are expected to synthesize what they understood from the text and gain an ability to draw the big picture when reading ends. Summarizing is the most applied strategy in post reading process. Babbitt (1996) defined summarizing as an effective strategy of reading which can be performed in various forms. Some of the suggested activities that can be applied during post-reading period are answering comprehending questions, sequencing the events based on the significance in the text, graphic organizers, comparing maps or charts that were filled in previous process of reading and the like.

2.7. Integration of Reading Strategies

Related literature showed that there are two different views about teaching reading strategies; one is teaching them as an integrated part of the lessons and the other is teaching separately from the lessons. However, the belief that strategy instruction should be conducted as integrated into the regular classes is supported by most researchers (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Pearson and Fielding, 1991). Therefore, there are some criteria about how to integrate reading strategies into the lessons.

One of the most important component of integrating reading strategies is what to do before determining on the reading strategies that were taught. According to Chamot (1993) and Oxford (2002), the instructors should know what the curriculum involves. The reason behind this fact is that otherwise students would be reluctant to use the reading strategies with the irrelevant topics. Secondly, teachers should know what strategies his/her students apply. To gather information about this, they are suggested to conduct strategy surveys, think-aloud lessons, make interviews with students and so on

(Chamot, 2004). It was also agreed on by some researchers that for some occasions students's opinions about what strategies they want to learn may be applied (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Nunan, 2002). In addition to this, strategies are suggested to determine on whether they suit the text (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Thus, taking the reading texts into consideration while selecting the suitable strategies is also important for the teachers.

Furthermore, selection of reading strategies is also suggested to suit the levels, goals and needs of the students, otherwise, the instruction may remain a difficult process for the learners (Janzen & Stoller, 1998; Sinatra et al., 2001). Therefore, students's readiness, background knowledge and demands had better be taken into consideration while selecting the reading strategies. Additionally, to select what reading strategies will be instructed is not sufficient to conduct a fruitful reading strategy instruction rather than that, to encourage learners to gain awareness of ways about how, when and where to employ reading strategies should be also taken into account. The related literature also shed light on the importance of practicing strategies on the right time, in the right place and for the right purpose (Anderson, 1999; Janzen, 2002; Kern, 1989; Pearson & Fielding, 1991).

Finally, it is important that teachers should be compliant to the new circumstances that may arise during the instruction as teachers are the ones who adopt the lessons and thus they are the ones who will decide on shifting the strategies and analyse the process of instruction (Janzen & Stoller, 1998).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview

This chapter aims to describe procedures and the design of the study revealing the findings of how much explicit reading strategy instruction promote 27 Turkish 8th grade students' reading strategy use and its function in TEOG central examination. The design and the context of the study then the selection of the participants and data sources are indicated. Finally, a detailed explanation of the classroom practices and the procedure are presented.

3.2. The Design of the Study

This study was a quasi-experimental study and adopt both qualitative and quantitative design. A reading strategy questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was used to elicit reading strategies employed by learners and their perspectives were evaluated with minute-papers. The researcher also kept a diary to note her observations during the implementation. Thus, the present study was conducted with a quasi-experimental research design as the study was implemented with an experimental group exposed to reading strategies in their selective English classes and a control group having a teacher-led instruction without applying explicit reading strategy instruction. In this study, a questionnaire was given to the participants of both experimental group and controlled group to determine which reading strategies were going to be implemented through the study. However, 57 students from the school were given the questionnaire as three students from other classes wanted to take the reading questionnaire. Although the total number of the learners in experimental and control group was 54, the researcher accepted to give the questionnaire to the ones who wanted to see the frequency of reading strategies for the purpose of expanding the exploration of reading strategy use of 8th graders. Thus the total number of the students given the reading questionnaire before the intervention is 57. As mentioned before, there were two groups of learners whose English proficiency levels were thought to be similar. As the first step, the reading strategies applied through the study were determined according to the results of reading strategy questionnaire and convinieny to the time, participants, objectives and

scope of the texts in the coursebook. Secondly, the experimental group (Group A) was instructed about reading strategies. Additional activities were prepared to apply through performing reading texts during the implementation with the experimental group. Group A wrote about their ideas about the each session when they were exposed to reading strategy instruction. The control group (Group B) was instructed traditionally without additional activities and explicit reading strategy instruction. After practice, the results of TEOG examination was taken as the proficiency test to get an evaluation of a possible difference in students' foreign language level. The results of TEOG examinations of both groups were calculated to see whether there is a meaningful difference between two groups. Finally, reading strategy questionnaire was given to the experimental group after the study to see whether reading strategy instruction would give an awareness of strategy use while reading and cause any possible increase in the frequency of instructed reading strategies through the implementation.

3.3. Participants

Participants of this study consisted of 27 eighth grade students from Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School. As it is an experimental study, there were two groups including an experimental and a control group. The age of the students is 14 in average. Both groups were to be chosen from 8th graders as they would take TEOG exam and therefore this study would give more reliable results about the effects of explicit reading strategy instruction on TEOG performance. Both of the groups were aimed to be same in number as the actual number of the students is 27 in each group, and expected to be equal with their English proficiency as the participants of both experimental and control group had taken English as a school subject from the 2nd grade in the same or similar schools. During the educational year of this study, both groups had English lesson six hours a week including two extra hours English as an elective lesson. Thus, learners of both groups were supposed to have similar educational background. They were also thought to belong to the same or similar cultural, social and economical background since they resided in the same neighborhood or near surroundings. None of the students in both groups had been to abroad and they had very few opportunities to practice English outside the school.

3.4. Instruments

For gathering data for this study, researcher applied triangulation method, which means as Denzin states (1978, p. 291) “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon”. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools were conducted so as to gather more reasonable results because administering variety of data sources may help us go to more reasonable conclusions. The combination of data from researcher’s observation, students’ perspectives and quantitative data of the survey and TEOG exam results were interpreted at the end of the study.

At the beginning of the study, a reading strategy questionnaire (Oxford et al’s, 2004) was used to elicit reading strategies employed by learners and the same instrument was given at the end of the study to find out whether strategy instruction develops experimental group’s awareness and rate of reading strategies use. To analyze and evaluate the results of the questionnaire, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used. The perspectives of Group A with minute-papers and observations of the instructor in her diary were evaluated at the end of the each class. The results of the TEOG examination of both groups were also evaluated to see whether there was a significant difference in English proficiency of both groups. Thus, for the purpose of supporting and supplementing the quantitative data gained from the tests, minute-paper and diaries of the students were used as qualitative data.

3.4.1. Minute-paper

Minute-paper was used as qualitative data tool to see what students have benefited from the lessons. Angelo and Cross (1993) suggested minute-paper as an utensil to help teachers to get short and simultaneous responses about the procedure of the lesson with the aim of finding what learners think they learnt through the instruction and what they think they do not understand. On the other hand, this technique may be varied according to the teacher’s goals thus it may be applied in terms of the questions asked, the process when it is implemented (end, middle, or beginning of class), and whether students give feedback individually or in groups. The most significant aim of applying minute-paper is to get rapid feedback on whether there was a similarity between the objective of the lesson and perspectives of the student. During the study, participants wrote what they perceived about the process on papers to answer the related questions about the lesson. However, not all mentioned questions were used

in each lesson as only the related question about the lesson was asked after each lesson. As a result, through the implementation, the researcher conducted minute-paper each week and at the end of the class. Related to the research question, students answered the following questions.

- 1) What does this lesson contribute to your foreign language learning process?
- 2) What do you think about the procedure of the lesson?
- 3) What does this lesson contribute to your comprehending reading texts?

3.4.2. Diary

The instructor kept diaries and wrote her observations about students' performance and her observations during the study. Keeping a diary enabled the researcher to be aware of the reading strategy instruction process with their weak points and improvements over the time and thus, helped her understand how the participants' foreign language learning processed. The researcher kept diaries for each week. Thus, observations in the diaries were used for the purpose of gaining qualitative data so as to construct relation with the quantitative data.

3.4.3. Reading Strategy Questionnaire

Before determining which strategies should be instructed during the study, it is important to see which strategies and to what extent the learners use the reading strategies. This is the reason why 'Reading Strategy Questionnaire' (Oxford et. al's 2004), was exposed by the researcher. It consists of 35 items including before, while and after reading strategies and a Likert scale (Brown & Rodgers, 2002) was used to provide learners 6-point likert scart ranging from '0'(almost never) to '5' (almost always). The students were expected to choose the number from 0 to 5 according to the frequency they used the strategies. It was planned to be employed not only before the reading strategies instruction but also at the end of the study. The questionnaire was not employed in its original language. Thus, the translated version was used. For the translated one to be more reliable and valid, the researcher opted for already applied and translated one through a back translation method by Uzunçakmak (2005). Additionally, the learners were not expected to write their names on the questionnaire so as to get the most accurate answers from them. Both groups were exposed to the reading strategy

questionnaire before the study to get a general idea of students' use of reading strategies and decide on which strategies were needed to instruct in the Experimental group. After the study, only the group who had reading strategy instruction, Group A, took the survey to see whether there was a meaningful difference between pre-study and post-study in terms of awareness and frequency of reading strategy use.

3.4.4. Reading Materials

The reading texts used through reading strategies instruction were to be chosen from the course book as TEOG test includes the contents of it and the objectives of the curriculum. However, all the texts in the course book had insufficient activities involving use of reading strategies. Thus, additional activities were prepared to use for pre, while and post reading strategies. These activities were determined according to the results of the reading strategy questionnaire as they were to be prepared after evaluating what reading strategies students needed. Aiming to investigate how much reading strategies instruction could improve comprehension of young EFL learners, the researcher of this study encouraged learners in experimental group to employ reading strategies in the process of reading strategy instruction. On the other hand, learners in control group were planned to read the texts without reading strategies instruction and only with the activities in the course book such as reading aloud, answer the questions, vocabulary and teacher's questions.

3.4.5. Selection of Groups

All the eighth classes were expected to have almost similar English level. The classrooms in the school were not formed according to the individual differences such as English level, learning differences and so on. Rather than that they were formed according to the equality in the quantity of male and female students (see 3.3). Thus, the researcher selected the groups with using convenient sampling method, however, she took the general average value of the classrooms into consideration and found out that they were almost same. However, some classes had more students with lower English level and all classes had one or two students with higher English level. Additionally, the researcher had only two classes, thus, she made her decision between those two classes. Taking the possible effect of reading strategy instruction on students with lower grades into account, the researcher selected the group including six students

with lower English level as an experimental group and the group having two students with higher level of English as a control group. On the other hand, the control group had only three students having lower scores and, as mentioned above, two students performing superior than the others in the classroom.

3.5. Implementation of Explicit Reading Strategies Instruction

It was the first week of February 2016 when the first session of the study started. The researcher explained what reading strategies mean and how it helps learners to comprehend what they read. Thus, the first session was conducted as a sample lesson with a reading text including reading strategies activities. As a first step, the instructor led the session by modeling the text with applying reading strategies. She explicitly taught seven reading strategies with related activities by using *read aloud and think aloud technique* to increase the awareness of the learners about using those strategies on the right time and in the right place. During the sessions of 1st and 2nd week, the instructor presented seven reading strategies; by explicitly showing and instructing how to apply strategies on sample texts from the students' course book.

After the sessions of 2nd week, the students could apply the reading strategies individually or, depending on the activities, with pair and group-work. However, the instructor still guided the learners in order to remind them strategy application. During the weeks, 3 and 4, the instructor continued to help the learners figure out how to employ the proper strategy. From the 5th week until 12th week, most of the learners were observed to be able to apply the reading strategies independently and accurately, for instance, while summarizing or expressing main ideas, they remembered to use the graphic organizers they had filled beforehand. The lessons including reading strategy instruction were implemented with graphic organizers to write the main idea on, visuals to attract the attention and activate prior knowledge, additional worksheets about key words, some short narratives from real life to trigger students' schema and sample TEOG questions to see the use of strategies overall.(See Appendix 2 for sample lesson with integration of reading strategies in detail.)

However, the researcher also aimed to encourage learners to use other three language skills during the implementation, thus for other language skills applied in the class, the researcher encouraged learners to read aloud the texts to help them improve their listening and pronunciation. As for speaking, the lessons were designed to help

students share their ideas with the group and pair works. Finally for writing, the participants wrote the summary of the texts. The researcher also told short events or gave examples about real life when students had difficulties to activate their prior knowledge about the text. All reading strategy instruction lessons consisted of pre, during, post and follow-up sections. Reading strategies were specifically used in pre and while sections. After each lesson for follow up sections, participants were assigned to solve a sample TEOG question related to the unit and they were encouraged to use the strategies while solving the question.

3.5.1. Regular Instruction

In the regular class structure, learners in control group studied the texts in the course book in the way that they had already been used to, which means that learners were exposed to reading texts in the course book without any additional activities and reading strategies. Examining the reading texts in the course book, it was clear that they involved nearly no pre, while and post reading activities. Rather than that, they had drills such as vocabulary, read a loud and answer the questions, which contributed very little to comprehension. As there were nearly no activities requiring reading strategies in the course book, the learners in control group tended to translate the text rather than construct the meaning by using effective reading strategies. However, the teacher avoided translation by asking some questions to trigger learners background information or their life experiences related to the topics of the texts. The teacher also motivated some students to guess the meaning of some key vocabulary from the text. To sum up, the learners were mainly required to read the text, answer the questions about the text, do vocabulary drills and respond to the questions asked by the teacher.

3.5.2. Procedure

The study class, same as the control group, had six - hours' English lessons a week. As two of those six-hours were elective English lessons, the researcher decided to conduct the implementation during those elective English lessons. Before the intervention, the researcher informed the headmaster of the school about the study and integrated seven reading strategies into the lessons. The texts were chosen from the course book and two reading texts from each unit was used during the intervention. During twelve-week application period, eight reading text from the course book was

conducted and the national curriculum was followed. Reading strategies were decided on and infused into the lesson in cooperation with the researcher and her supervisor. As for prediction, use of title for predicting the content, use of clues in the content for predicting the meaning of some key unknown words and use of background knowledge to guess the meaning were decided on to instruct. To use and develop the schema and background information of the learners, the strategy of linking the content with background knowledge was chosen. Summarizing was also instructed and as it was thought to be a complementary strategy to summarizing, figuring out the main ideas of the paragraphs was also decided to instruct. Additionally, to encourage learners to get the main ideas and comprehend the texts faster, skimming was chosen as another strategy to be instructed through the implementation.

The study lasted for 12 weeks and to select the strategies for the intervention, there were five criteria for the researcher. The first one was the findings of the reading questionnaire conducted before the study and the second one was the suitability of the strategies to the texts and time scope. For the third step, convenience of the strategies whether they matched the goals and objectives of being effective when they were implemented through the reading texts in the classroom was taken into consideration. For the next step, complement of strategies to each other was taken into account as the criterion. Finally, the level of students' English performance and readiness were regarded to choose and integrate the reading strategies.

At the end of each session through the study, the students were asked to write their opinions about strategies instruction in the minute-paper. They did not write their names on the minute paper so as to gain the true reflection from the students. In the last week of the instruction, the participants wrote their overall ideas about the whole study. Finally, the researcher and the participants expressed their opinion and gave reflection about the strategy instruction to each other.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative and the qualitative results of the data obtained from Reading Strategies Questionnaire, participants' minute-paper responses, the researcher's diary, TEOG test results of both experimental and control group, and the discussion derived from the data analysis. The findings of the study are presented in four main sections: analysis of TEOG test results, interpretation of students' responses in minute-paper, the findings of Reading Strategies Questionnaire and data gathered from the researcher's diary.

4.2. Analysis of TEOG Test Results of Experimental and Control Group

Regarding the reading strategies instruction applied in the experimental group, achievement of participants of both control and experimental group in the TEOG exam was analyzed so as to see whether the reading strategies instruction created a meaningful difference in language learning process. Before counting the values, two students with high score was omitted from the control group as there was a huge difference between the rest of the class, on the other hand, two students getting below 10 points were also not added to the calculation of experimental group for the same reason as the control group. Thus scores of 25 students of each group were analyzed. The test scores of both groups were analyzed with statistical data to observe if there was a meaningful difference between two groups. The results observed in Table 1 shows that the experimental group performed superior than the control group. Taking the means of both groups into consideration, it is seen that learners performance in experimental group seemed to be affected positively by reading strategies instruction. Comparing the mean value (69,20) of the control group and the experimental group (55,80), it is evident that the value of experimental group demonstrated a greater difference. Beside this, the fact that calculated t-value (,038) is smaller than the critical t-value (,05) demonstrates an evident of meaningful difference between two groups. As mentioned before, that the calculated t-value is smaller than the critical t-value means that there is a statistically meaningful difference between two groups, in other words, it

may be inferred that a greater progress was achieved by the learners in experimental group than the learners in control group. However, as it is seen on Table 1, the values for standard deviations of experimental group (%24,138) is greater than the control group (%20,087), which means that there is a greater difference between the learners with poor and high grades in experimental group, therefore, the reason of such a difference between the mean values of two groups might be due to the greater performance of the students with high grades in experimental group. However, the reason of such a significant mean difference may not be explained with two or three students' high performance in the exam, rather than that, it may be inferred that the students in the experimental group benefited from reading strategies instruction and relatedly the more successful learners of the experimental group did better in TEOG exam than those in control group.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Means and Standard Deviations of Group A and B in TEOG Exam

Groups	Number	Mean	SD (%)	Sig.(2-tailed)
Focus	25	69,20	24,138	0,038
Control	25	55,80	20,087	

To sum up, it is obvious that the efficiency of reading strategies instruction is observed better in a more expanded time, however, in an educational context such a difference of mean values of two groups may be considered as a significant contribution of explicit reading strategies instruction to the performance of the participants in the experimental group.

4.3. Analysis of the Pre and Post Reading Questionnaire

The participants of both control and experimental group were given a reading strategies questionnaire to see the level of their reading strategies use before the instruction process. However, the same questionnaire was administered to only experimental group so as to find out whether the students made any progress in terms of employing and being aware of reading strategies after the reading strategies instruction.

The questionnaire, originally prepared by Oxford et al's (2004) and later translated and employed by Uzunçakmak (2005), includes 35 items within before, while and after reading strategies and a Likert scale (Brown & Rodgers, 2002) consisting of 6-point likert scart ranging from '0' (almost never) to '5' (almost always). 1,66 was computed as the border mean value,in other words, the strategies of which mean value was between 0 and 1,66 were accepted as being infrequently used. The reason why 1,66 seperated the ranking was 6-point Likert scale ranged from '0' to' 5'. Thus, respectively, for 'moderate' and 'frequent' ranks, the values between 1,66 and 3,33 and, 3,34 and 5,00 were calculated. The data obtained from the pre and post questionnaire were analyzed via SPSS Paired-Samples T-test.

Table 2

Reading Strategies used with the least frequency by the Eighth Graders

Item no:	Reading strategies	N	M
2	Considering what type of text it is	57	1,11915
16	Trying to understand the meaning of a word by dividing it into parts	57	1,3509
23	Reading aloud the entire text	57	1,2456
35	Summarizing the text	57	1,1250

It is evident with the results in Table 2 above that four of the strategies were almost never used by the eighth graders. Findings showed that summarizing the text and reading aloud the entire text seem to be two of the least applied strategies by the students, however, the analysis also demonstrated that considering what type of text it is and trying to understand the meaning of a word by dividing it into parts were used rarely by the eight graders as well. Thus, it may be inferred that any reading strategies instruction about the items mentioned above would be beneficial for the students.

Table 3

Reading Strategies Used with Moderate Frequency by the 8th Graders

Item no:	Reading strategies	N	M
1	Using the title to help predict the contents	57	2,4561
3	Skimming	57	1,7544
4	Paying attention to parts of sentences	57	2,1754
6	Focusing on the tense of a verb	57	2,8947
10	Paying attention to sentence structure	57	2,5789
11	Continuing reading despite difficulties	57	2,4386
12	Changing reading speed depending on the difficulty of a text	57	3,0702
13	Reading aloud the difficult parts	57	1,8947
15	Linking content with background knowledge	57	2,7193
17	Guessing meaning using clues from the text	57	2,4561
18	Guessing meaning using background knowledge	57	2,5088
19	Checking what each pronoun refers to	57	2,3860
24	Making a picture in the mind about what the text is saying	57	2,6316
25	Using non-target language to understand the text	57	1,7544
26	Going back to previous sentences when faced difficulty	57	2,8070
28	Using slashes to divide a sentence grammatically	57	1,9825
29	Skipping sentences that are not understood	57	2,8947
30	Predicting what will come next	57	2,6842
31	Paying attention to linking words	57	2,2807
32	Writing down key words	57	2,1053
33	Trying to figure out the main idea of each paragraph	57	1,9474

The figures in Table 3 shows that eighth graders use most of the reading strategies to some extent but still they remain below the range of moderate frequency use. Keeping in mind the fact that 1,66 and 3,33 were considered as cut-off values for dividing frequency of use into segments, a mean score less than 3 may imply that 8th graders fell within the inadequate use of reading strategies in table 3. Data gathered from the analysis of the table demonstrated that some reading strategies (items:1,3,15,17 ,18 and 33) ,which are regarded as effective and beneficial to comprehend the text, were not used with the favourable level. Based on the data in table 3, it is clear that any

implementation about reading strategies may contribute to the students' language learning process.

As can be seen in Table 4, 10 reading strategies out of 35 were the highest-ranking strategies. However, some items in this part may be a barrier in a foreign language learning process, such as; translating each sentence into Turkish (item:8), trying to understand the meaning of every word (item:7), starting from the 1st paragraph and reading all the way through the last paragraph (item:9), and following the lines with pen or finger (27). Those with the highest-ranking items may show that the students did not apply a variety of reading strategies such as predicting, skimming and linking the content with the background knowledge and the like before the practice.

Table 4

Reading Strategies used with the most frequency by the Eighth Graders

Item No	Reading Strategies	N	M
5	Paying attention to the beginning and end of paragraphs	57	3,3509
7	Trying to understand the meaning of every word	57	3,7368
8	Translating each sentence into Turkish	57	4,0526
9	Starting from the 1st paragraph and reading all the way through the last paragraph	57	3,8596
14	Skipping unknown words	57	3,7363
20	Underlining important parts	57	4,1579
22	Going over difficult parts	57	3,9474
27	Following the lines read with pen or finger	57	3,6667

Overall, the results revealed that the eighth graders used reading strategies to a certain extent but not to an adequate level. When the strategies were analyzed according to the frequency level of use and convenience to the limited time in an educational context, seven reading strategies were chosen to implement in the study. Using the title to predict the content (item 1), skimming (item:3), linking the content with the background knowledge (item 15), summarizing (item:35), guessing meaning using clues from the text (item:17), guessing meaning using background knowledge (item:18) and figuring out the main idea (item:33) were infused into the lessons. As only seven

strategies were instructed through the study, the items related to those strategies were analyzed after the study to see whether there was a meaningful increase in the frequency of reading strategies use.

After the twelve-week explicit reading strategy instruction period, the participants in experimental group were given the same questionnaire to find out the possible difference with the mentioned reading strategies above. Except for the item: 8, the other items in table 5 related to the strategies applied during reading strategy instruction through the process of twelve-week study. Data gained from the results of reading questionnaire demonstrated that the frequency of ‘using the title to predict the content’, ‘skimming’, ‘linking the content with the background knowledge’, ‘summarizing’, ‘guessing meaning using clues from the text’, ‘guessing meaning using background knowledge’ and ‘figuring out the main idea’ increased after the study. The p value (,000) showed that the difference between pre-study and post-study was significant in favor of using reading strategies. On the other hand, it was observed that the frequency of translating each sentence into Turkish (item:8) decreased, which may be considered as a positive effect of reading strategy instruction as it may imply that students preferred applying strategies to translating each sentence into Turkish. To sum up, the figures in Table 6 demonstrated that students seemed to improve the reading strategies use to a significant extent after the reading strategies instruction.

Table 5

Analyses of the Results of Experimental Group's Pre and Post Reading Questionnaire

	Mean 1	Mean 2	Standard Deviation	Sig(2-tailed)
Pair-1	2,4074	3,7037	,99285	,000
Pair-3	1,8889	3,1481	,94433	,000
Pair-8	4,1111	2,3333	,84732	,000
Pair-15	2,7778	4,0000	1,05003	,000
Pair-18	2,6667	3,5926	,95780	,000
Pair-17	2,4559	3,1481	1,14100	,000
Pair-33	2,1754	3,8037	,97402	,000
Pair-35	1,2222	3,1481	,94103	,000

4.4. Analyses of Minute-Paper and the Researcher's Observations in her Diary

The quantitative data were extended with the qualitative data analyzed using content analysis method. So far as it is seen, quantitative data gathered within statistical analysis reveals that the experimental group seemed to achieve better results than the control group in TEOG exam. It was discovered that explicit reading strategies instruction had a possible positive effect on students' TEOG exam scores. In order to support the quantitative data, minute-paper and the researcher's diary were also analyzed through content analysis. Students in experimental group wrote their ideas about reading strategy instruction at the end of the each session. They were guided with three open-ended questions as: 1) What does this lesson contribute to your reading skills? 2) What do you think about the procedure of the lesson? 3) What does this lesson contribute to your comprehending reading texts? However, at the end of the each lesson, students were required to response only one of the questions. In the criteria used in analyzing the qualitative data were finding out the indications of the raising awareness of reading strategies, any indications of reading strategy use (using background knowledge, predicting, recognizing the relations between comprehending and reading strategies) and any indication of meaningful learning based on reading strategies. Therefore, qualitative data was evaluated from the aspect of features of six themes (awareness, prediction, background information, comprehension, learning and feelings towards the practice) and related codes identifying those themes. The researcher used deductive coding, however, through the process of analysing data, new codes were added as the content of students utterances required. Table 6 shows the themes, their codes and frequencies of those codes. In relation to table 6, themes and their codes were analyzed with demonstrating two of the learners' expressions for each code first and then researcher's related notes in her diary were also infused after the analyses of students' utterances for each theme.

Table 6

Learners' feedback about the Implementation

Themes	Codes	<i>f</i> (Frequencies)
Awareness	Usefulness of reading strategies	116
Prediction	Using title for the content	83
	Using clues from the text	72
	Using background knowledge	70
Background information	Making connection with previous knowledge	82
Comprehension	Figuring out the main idea	69
	Picking the relevant information	72
	Translating the text	55
Learning	Cooperative learning	25
	Usefulness of materials	32
Time	Saving time	45
Feelings	Boredom	30
	Pleasure	60

As it is demonstrated in table 6, participants implied the usefulness of reading strategies 116 times through the twelve-week- implementation. Some examples of their expressions involving implications about usefulness of reading strategies are as follows:

Participant:1

I did very well in the lesson because I understood the text and did a lot of activities correctly. Reading strategies really works because I do not have to waste my time thinking on every single word in the text, that is what I did before.

Participant:2

I learnt that we do not need to read the whole text in detail again and again for every single question because some questions do not require details. I wish we had the same instruction in our Turkish lesson because sometimes I do not get the main idea in Turkish texts; either. I think reading strategies helps us understand the main idea better.

The content analysis of the students answers implied that they improved the proper strategies to catch the required information while and after reading. Those responses of experimental group participants may provide us information about how

they became more aware of the reading strategies as they clearly expressed when and how to use the reading strategies. In other words, they recognized what they sought for; a detail or a main idea, thus they gave us implications about how they were getting more practical about applying reading strategies as they did not need to read the text repeatedly for the information needed. It was also mentioned on participants' minute-paper that students applied the reading strategies that they had learnt in English lesson while reading in their native language, which may imply students seemed to be more aware of the usefulness of reading strategies and possibly wanted to expand the use of reading strategies on Turkish lessons. Researcher's notes in her diary also demonstrated that participants were willing to apply proper reading strategies as it was helpful for them to get the required information about the text. It was also observed that most of the students completed the activities, involving application of reading strategies through the text correctly, which may imply that participants gained awareness about using reading strategies and regarded reading strategy use as useful.

It is also seen in Table 6 that prediction involving guessing the topic of the text, using clues from the text and using background to guess the meaning were implied by the participants on minute-paper through the practice. Two of the utterances for each item are as follows:

Participant:3

*We should always **predict the meaning**. If we don't know the word, we can easily guess the meaning because there are always **clues about it in the text**. It was easier to understand because **we could guess the idea** and think better in English.*

Participant:4

***Predicting** is very **important for reading**. It is what I learnt from this lesson.*

Participant:5

*Reading strategies really improves my reading ability. Now I am more confident about comprehending a text because I can apply strategies. I should read more because we can not understand what we read if we do not have any idea about **the topic**. **Guessing** is very important.*

Participant:6

*Sometimes we can get the **meaning if we think what we know about the topic**. We can guess the meaning of the unknown word if we think carefully.*

Participant:7

*I learnt how to predict **the meaning of a word** in this lesson. If we **guess**, we do not need to translate the sentence. We think about **what we know about the topic** and guess the meaning.*

Participant:8

*If we understand what is told in the text, we can **guess the meaning of unknown words**. We can think about what **is told in the text** and predict the meaning of the words.*

Participants responses, as it is demonstrated above, may indicate that reading strategies helped them guess the meaning as they no longer stuck to the unknown words, rather than that, they preferred applying reading strategies such as predicting the meaning and guessing the idea in the text or using background. It may be inferred that students developed the ability of guessing through reading strategy use as they made a correlation between the meaning of the unknown words and the clues in the text. Additionally, notes in researcher's diary about prediction showed that learners seemed to have difficulties about using clues in the content to predict the meaning on early weeks of the intervention, however, for the following weeks they seemed to improve the ability to make connections between the unknown words and the content in the text.

Table:6 also indicates that use of background knowledge with the code of making connection with previous knowledge was stated by the participants on minute paper through the intervention. Some examples of participants' utterances about the theme is as follows:

Participant:9

*I like this lesson very much because I believe that I can understand what I read. I will always guess and **make a connection between what I read and what I know about the topic**.*

Participant:10

*Before this implementatin I couldn't understand anything from the texts on the internet. Now I understand everything better. We **made a correlation between what we know and the content of the text.** I was very good at it. I am very happy because I understood the texts. We do not have any chance to do these activities in our regular English lessons.*

It can be inferred from the participants' replies that students recalled the meaning in the text by activating prior knowledge and establishing a connection between what they knew and what was told in the text. According to the researcher's diary, participants seemed to develop using previous knowledge and through the implementation they seemed to be more willing about using background knowledge comparing to the beginning of the practice as they realized how it helped them understand the text.

The theme of comprehension with the codes of figuring out the main idea, picking the relevant information and translating the text was implied by the participants during the intervention as it is shown in table 6. Two examples of participants' statements about each code of comprehension are as follows:

Participant:11

*This lesson helps me **pick the correct information from the text.** I think I will benefit from it in exams.*

Participant:12

*I think the procedure of this lesson is perfect because I am more aware of what to do when reading a text. For example, I do not have to read the whole text in detail. I am required **to get the specific information from the text.***

Participant:13

*I understood what I read and I answered all the questions correctly. I am very happy because **I can read and understand the text without translating into Turkish.** It will also help me to do better scores in the exam.*

Participant:14

*I **understood** everything about the text because I was able to **get the main idea** and did all the activities correctly. It is new to me, but I **understood** it very well because it is easier. It will also help me to prepare my presentation.*

Participant:15

*We are always busy with activities in our English class. My reading is improving because I can **comprehend** what I read. I am very lucky because **I can understand without thinking in Turkish.***

Participant:16

*I wish we had the same instruction in our Turkish lesson because sometimes I do not get the main idea in Turkish texts; either. I think **strategies instruction** helps us **understand the main idea better.***

As it is seen, students seemed to improve their comprehension by using reading strategies. It can be inferred that by using reading strategies they could understand the text without applying Turkish, in other words, students did not try to translate the text, rather than that, they seemed to understand the text in English. Therefore, participants seemed to benefit from reading strategies use to achieve a better comprehension as they applied reading strategies instead of translating the text into Turkish. On the other hand, learners possibly improved how to apply reading strategies for picking the right information needed since their utterances implied that comprehension does not mean understanding the text with all its details in the text, instead, by reading strategy use, they seemed to improve their comprehension about getting the main ideas of the texts.

As demonstrated in table 6, participants implied cooperative learning and usefulness of materials in their responses to describe the theme of learning.

Participant:17

*It develops my reading because we learnt strategies and **with the help of materials** I can understand the text better now.*

Participant:18

*This lesson contributed a lot to my reading because now I don't have to translate the texts. **The materials were enjoyable.***

Participant:19

*It develops my reading because we both read and comprehend the text. I did the reading activities with Meryem, **we helped each other.***

Participant:20

*I really liked the lessons because we did a lot of activities, reading was not difficult for me because **I did the activities with my friends** and it was very enjoyable.*

Based on the students' statements as mentioned above, participants seemed to enjoy cooperating with their friends during the pair and group-work through the intervention. In addition to this, it may be inferred that students benefited from the guided materials such as graphic organizers, mind-map, vocabulary worksheets and so on through the implementation. Notes in the researcher's diary also demonstrated that students were eager to interact with each other and more motivated when together. It was also noted that students with lower English level seemed to be motivated during group and pair-work by cooperating with the students having higher English level in the group or pair interaction.

Table:6 also indicated that theme of time with the code of saving time was stated by the participants through the study. Two examples of participants' utterances about the theme is as follows:

Participant:21

*It develops my reading because I can understand and do the activities in **a shorter time** than before.*

Participant:22

*I think this lesson contributes a lot to my **speed of reading** and understanding what I read.*

Participants' ideas about reading strategy instruction seemed to be in favour of using the time more efficiently. Similarly, researcher's notes indicated that when compared to the beginning of the intervention, learners completed the activities in a shorter time through the later process of the implementation.

Feelings towards the implementation were also defined as boring and enjoyable by the participants as it is shown in table 6. Two examples of each code of feeling of the learners are as follows:

Participant:23

*It develops my reading because I learnt strategies so it is **more enjoyable** and easier for me but sometimes I can not comprehend the text even though I knew the meaning of the words. I think I should read more!*

Participant:24

*I think it was a very good lesson because I did all the activities correctly and understood the text very well. Reading is **fun** and easier now.*

Participant:25

*It is more difficult than our usual lesson because we did a lot of job during reading. I prefer previous reading lessons because I **got bored**.*

Participant:26

*I think it is very difficult because the materials are difficult and **boring**. I did not like it at all.*

Based on students' information on the minute paper, they seemed to have a difficulty in adopting themselves to reading strategy instruction and thus they seemed to get bored during the practice. However, the statements and the implications about the feeling of boredom was made for three weeks from the beginning of the study, for later weeks they did not mention any idea about boredom. For the following weeks until the end of the implementation, participants statements implied that the process was enjoyable. According to the expressions in the researcher's diary, it was also observed that students seemed unfamiliar to the instruction so they had some difficulties at the

beginning of the intervention, for example some students did not want to try to do the activities, however, they were willing to listen and observe what others did.

Overall, the utterances of the participants through the instruction revealed that reading was no longer a complicated item for them as they applied reading strategies. Beside this, it can be inferred that they made a comparison between their reading performance before and after the instruction and experienced the progress in their reading achievement and effectiveness of reading strategies. Thus, participants seemed to have become aware of the usefulness of applying reading strategies. It can be assumed that they had some difficulties at the beginning of the study, however, they seemed to have established a connection between comprehending the text and reading strategies use. To sum up, what may be inferred from the content analyses of the minute paper was that participants' awareness of evaluating and improvement of their reading comprehension increased, thus students made associations between the contribution of reading strategies to their language learning process and its positive effects on leading a meaningful learning with its opportunities to work together, which possibly had contributions to their comprehension.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Summary of Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the discussion of some significant research results based on the findings related to the effect of reading strategy instruction on eighth graders' English language proficiency through language learning process in a school context. Firstly, the findings about the effect of reading strategy instruction on participants' English proficiency will be examined through the results of TEOG exams of both groups. For the next step, findings gathered from students' expressions on minute paper will be discussed from the aspect of any improvement in their awareness of using reading strategies and language learning process. Thirdly, to gain more reliable conclusions, data gathered from the reading strategy questionnaire will be discussed. The last part will take over the researcher's notes in her diary and her discussion about the involvement of the participants during the intervention.

The results obtained from the score of TEOG exams showed that the experimental group possibly performed superior than the control group. It was observed that there was a meaningful difference between two groups with regard to mean value. Therefore it might be stated that learners' performance in experimental group were affected positively by reading strategies instruction. Taking the limited time period into consideration, such a difference between two groups may be evaluated as a significant positive effect of the reading strategies instruction in an EFL setting. On the other hand, the findings indicated that deviation value in experimental group was higher than the one in control group, which may mean that participants with lower grades did not benefit from reading strategies instruction in terms of language proficiency. However, it may also show that higher-achievers in experimental group performed greater than the ones in control group. Unlike the findings of this study, Abi (2014) in his study found out that strategy training had possibly no effect on students levels of language proficiency in a short-term treatment period. Therefore, a longer process of the instruction is estimated to increase the success and relatedly lessen the gap between low and high achievers. On the other hand, having some specific common characteristics with this study such as scope of the study and target participants, Dokur's (2017) research findings presented the similar results with this study, and pointed out a

meaningful difference between language proficiency of experimental group and control group after the reading strategies implementation. Hence, for more reliable results, the study should be carried for a longer time and hold several and various exams periodically. Research findings related to the effect of reading strategy instruction on language proficiency may vary resulted not only from time but also other kinds of variables. As Grenfell and Harris (1999) stated that the efficiency of strategy instruction has some variables such as motivation, attitude and learner type. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that the experimental group is a mixed ability class and has also low-learners. With regard to all these variables, the effect of reading strategy instruction on students' language proficiency seemed to be positive in the present study.

In terms of being more aware of reading strategy use and effectiveness of reading strategy use, findings obtained from minute-paper of the students implied that they improved their reading strategy use and awareness to a greater extent comparing to pre-study period. As stated by the participants at the very beginning of the reading strategy treatment, it was boring to apply reading strategies for the participants in the first sessions of the study, however, through the study, the more they were involved in the study, the more they became aware of the benefits of reading strategies. It was noted by the researcher that learners seemed to have difficulties in adopting themselves to the new application. Hence, besides the data gained from students' replies on the minute paper, teacher's diary made apparent that students seemed to be reluctant to apply reading strategies at the beginning of the study, however, it is commonly considered as an usual step of getting used to a new application.

For further weeks, participants' utterances in the minute-paper demonstrated that the students' awareness of evaluating and improving their reading comprehension increased as they seemed to make connections between the contribution of reading strategies to their language learning process and its promoting effects to their comprehending texts without applying Turkish. It was possibly due to the fact that they could take an active part with cooperating with each other during the process of reading in English lessons rather than try to translate the text word by word individually. Moreover, to see the fact that simply translating the text is not the only tool to comprehend an English text might raise students' awareness about using reading strategies and prevent them from consuming time on translating each sentence in the text. With relevancy to the findings of this study, Jager (2002) described the learning

with the promoting effect of strategies use and students' active participation through using strategies. Additionally, students were engaged with a wide range of guided materials and activities during the reading strategy instruction, which might promote students' involvement in the lessons and help them use the strategies more practical.

One other expression of participants on minute paper worth mentioning is that they found reading strategies very useful as they were able to predict the meaning of the words and make connections between what they previously knew and the content of the text, which may imply that participants realized the effectiveness of reading strategy use. In parallel with that, they stated that applying reading strategies avoided time consuming as they did not waste time on thinking on every single word. Based on the participants' statements, it can be inferred that students possibly saved time during TEOG exam while answering the questions, which might play an important role in the achievement of the test. The findings of Barnett's study (1988) supported this study as it was mentioned that those who did not have strategy training tried to understand every single word or the whole text with its structural properties rather than making connections between paragraphs and ignoring the words which had nearly no contribution to comprehending the text. In addition to this, Güngör (2005) in her research discussed reading strategy use of the eighth graders and inferred that as they focus on exams, they do not improve their reading and correspondingly use inadequate number of strategies. Hence, with regard to explicit reading strategy instruction implemented in this study, the application seemed to be in favour of the participants as they improved their reading through use of reading strategies and possibly affected their performance in TEOG exam.

Another significant idea mentioned by the students was that they wanted to apply the reading strategies in Turkish lessons. It may point out that students benefited from the reading strategies and intended to integrate them to Turkish texts so as to increase their reading achievement in their native-language. The study conducted by Kurt (2012) had similar findings with this present one from the point that students using reading strategies had better achievement not only in English but also in Turkish. Similarly, Suwantharathip (2015) shed light on transferring reading strategies on language learning as learners used the strategies through reading in their native language and the language they are learning. Hence, one probable inference from that mentioned finding is that reading strategy instruction seemed to be beneficial for

students for language learning and had a double impact, one was on foreign language learning and the other was on improving reading skill in their native language as well.

To sum up, the participants in experimental group began to improve the ability to make predictions and connections during reading, which might mean they promoted their comprehension of the texts. Students' statements on minute paper made apparent that they applied Turkish less than pre-study period as they benefited from strategy use and correspondingly used reading strategies more.

Data gathered from the results of reading strategies questionnaire also supported the findings of students' utterances on minute paper and TEOG test results. In parallel with them, findings demonstrated that participants in experimental group increased use of reading strategies instructed through the implementation. Through the process of application, seven reading strategies were chosen to integrate into the lessons and at the end of the study the possible improvement of those mentioned strategies use showed a growth in relation to the frequency of reading strategies use.

Before the intervention, out of 35 items, items related to seven reading strategies, 'using the title to predict the content', 'skimming', 'linking the content with the background knowledge', 'summarizing', 'guessing meaning using clues from the text', 'guessing meaning using background knowledge' and 'figuring out the main idea' were calculated as the least and medium level reading strategy use, however, after the implementation, the results of the post-questionnaire indicated that students' frequency of reading strategies use increased with a significant degree. On the other hand, one thing to keep in mind is that mentioning to use the strategies may not mean they are accurately used by the participants. Oxford and Nam (1998) grounded the strategy use not on how often they are used but on how they are used. Relatedly, based on the findings of her study, Uzunçakmak (2005) implied that although there was a difference between two sample groups, reading strategy questionnaires did not show it correctly. However, the survey conducted in this present study was estimated to show consistency with its findings as the results of survey were parallel with the findings of minute-paper, teacher's diary and TEOG test results. The findings of the present study also showed a similarity with several prior studies as they found out that reading strategies instruction possibly developed the use of reading strategy use of the learners (Talebi, 2009; Akkakoson & Setobol, 2009; Wichadee, 2011).

Notes in researcher's diary reflected the similar findings with the expressions of participants on minute-paper from the point that students were engaged with the

activities during the reading strategy instruction and applied Turkish less frequently when compared to the pre-study period. Additionally, researcher's diary pointed out that students seemed to enjoy more when they used reading strategies and so they became more involved in the instruction process. While they were predicting the meaning, summarizing and using background information, they worked as a group or pair with the guided materials such as graphic organizers or similar additional activities. Grounded on the teacher's diary, it may be implied that when reading strategy training is given to the participants with guided materials, group and pair works besides the individual work, it possibly promotes students' engagement in language learning process, reading strategy use and inevitably their English language proficiency. Green and Oxford (1995) suggested that strategies should be provided with a variety of situations infused into the lesson. Thus, it may be concluded that when opportunities are created to encourage learners to use reading strategies with various tasks and materials in the class, benefits and frequency of reading strategy use might rise and gradually develop English language proficiency.

The notes in researcher's diary also made apparent that participants in experimental group seemed to be motivated during the intervention. The reason why they seemed to be so might be due to the role of strategy training which enabled learners to be active and interactive during the lessons. When students and the researcher shared their ideas at the end of the practice, it was implied that as learners participated in learning process actively and build meaning through the intervention, they found the lessons meaningful. However, as mentioned before, during group works some students were observed to remain passive comparing to the rest of the classroom. One of the reasons of that situation possibly due to the limited time of the study as some learners needed more time to get used to a new application. Another reason of that mentioned observation noted in researcher's diary might be individual differences as some learners preferred being silent even though they knew what to do. Researcher's diary also mentioned another factor for those learners as some learners' level EL was not sufficient enough to produce the foreign language such as writing and speaking. Thus, insufficient participation of those learners to the lesson might depend on their EF level, which could possibly decrease the profits of the treatment. Nonetheless, those students who seemed to be passive during the intervention were also observed to be motivated during the practice and group-work as they concentrated on the process and

tried to their best to comprehend the texts while filling the graphic organizers and checking summaries through interacting with their peers.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to draw conclusions and pedagogical implications from the results of the study. Additionally, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research are reflected on this chapter.

6.2. Conclusion

This study was conducted with the aim to find out whether or not explicit reading strategy instruction has an effect on young adolescents' English language proficiency in terms of TEOG exam. For that purpose, reading strategy instruction was infused into eighth grade curriculum with reading strategy tasks prepared by the researcher and texts in the course book provided by the Ministry of National Education. To gather data, pre and post questionnaires, minute-paper, teacher's diary and TEOG exam results were used. Therefore; the answers of the following questions were sought in this study.

1. Do the young adolescents use reading strategies while reading English before study? If so, what are the least and the most frequently used reading strategies?
2. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction have an effect on the development of reading strategies use of eighth graders? If so, what kind of developments are these?
3. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction increase the frequency of instructed reading strategy use of eighth graders' after study?
4. Does integrated explicit reading strategy instruction have an effect on eighth graders' TEOG score? If any, in what ways does it affect?

The first research question aimed to find out the students' use of reading strategies level and the least and the most frequent used reading strategies before the study. With this purpose, a reading strategies questionnaire with 35 items involving reading strategies was given to the students. The data obtained from the results of

quantitative analysis demonstrated that students applied reading strategies to some extent, however, they were not in the favourable level. The data gathered from the questionnaire also showed that the least frequent used reading strategies by eighth graders were; considering what type of text it is, trying to understand the meaning of a word by dividing it into parts, reading aloud the entire text and summarizing the text, on the other hand, the most frequently applied reading strategies are paying attention to the beginning and end of the paragraphs, trying to understand the meaning of every word, translating each sentence into Turkish, starting from the first sentence and reading all the way through the last paragraph, skipping unknown words, underlining important parts, going over difficult parts and following the lines with pen or finger. Therefore, the data gathered for the first research question revealed that the students' use of reading strategies was either low or medium. Overall, the results revealed that the 8th graders employed reading strategies not to an adequate level before the study.

The second research question targeted to figure out whether or not explicit reading strategy instruction had an effect on the development of reading strategy use. Data obtained via content analysis of minute paper and teacher's diary indicated that students seemed to improve their use of reading strategies in the ways that they seemed to gain awareness of usefulness of reading strategy use and perform development about how and when to use them (only the strategies that were instructed through the study). Relatedly, the third research question sought an answer whether there was an increase in the rate of instructed reading strategy use of the participants after the study. Data was obtained via reading strategies questionnaire and the results revealed that students raised the frequency of the instructed reading strategy use. Taking the second and third research questions into consideration as interrelated, quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data showed that participants seemed to gain significant awareness and enhancement of reading strategy use.

The fourth research question addressed the impact of reading strategy instruction on students' TEOG exam results and relatedly their English level. The quantitative findings of experimental group evidently demonstrated a higher performance when compared with those of control group. The findings showed that there was a statistically meaningful difference between the performance of two groups in the frame of mean value. However, the standard deviation value of the experimental group was greater than the control group, thus the effect of reading strategy instruction on participants with lower level of English seemed to be less, however, considering limited time scope of the

intervention, data collected from the statements of participants may imply that this gap is estimated to be less if the practice would last for longer period of time. In relation to the utterances of participants' responses on minute paper, participants possibly improved comprehension through the process of explicit reading strategy use and saved time during TEOG examination, which might affect their performance on the positive side in the exam. Overall, it might be concluded that reading strategy instruction enabled the participants to do better in TEOG exam, which might be considered as a significant improvement in their English language proficiency.

To conclude, students' use of reading strategies was to a certain rate before the study, however, it can not be thought as totally accurate results since questionnaires may reflect which strategies they know but give no clues about how accurately they apply them. Thus, for the present study both qualitative and quantitative data gathered through the process of explicit reading strategy instruction may provide us more reliable conclusions about the effect of explicit reading strategy instruction on students' language proficiency and use of reading strategy use, therefore, the answers of the research questions showed that infusion of reading strategies into EFL setting through explicit reading strategy instruction seemed to have apparently some positive effects on the students' English language proficiency.

6.3. Pedagogical Implications

This study was conducted on 27 young adolescent learners from 8th grade in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School in Adana, Turkey to find out whether or not there was a meaningful difference in their English language proficiency and use of reading strategies through implementing explicit reading strategy instruction in EFL setting. It was also launched to challenge traditional foreign language learning setting into a more meaningful learning process, which can correspondingly result in the improvement of learners' foreign language and TEOG exam results. The results revealed that the participants increased the frequency of reading strategies use and seemed to enhance their foreign language proficiency. Gradually, a few implications can be derived from this study.

One of the possible significant implications of this research is that when students are exposed to reading with being aware of using reading strategies, though it is different from the usual EFL setting which mostly aims to improve learners' reading

skills by simply translating, it is observed that there can be significantly positive change in their foreign language proficiency and reading strategies use. From that point, instruction of reading strategies, which is also believed to be one of the significant tools in promoting language learning, can suggest a useful implementation to challenge traditional teacher-led language learning. Thus, it can be implied that when a less teacher-based but a more student-centered application with providing various opportunities for meaningful learning is conducted in EFL setting, foreign language outcomes of the learners can be positive. Additionally, the evidence of this study suggests that applying reading strategies may lessen the students' use of Turkish and translating when reading a text and help them think and practice in English. It may be implied that using reading strategies to comprehend a text has a positive impact on students' participation in the process of language learning as the majority of the participants stated that they managed to comprehend the texts without applying Turkish and experienced better performance in an EFL setting, which they had not experienced in the traditional language class. In general, therefore, rather than simply translating the texts, it seems that students consider foreign language learning as more meaningful in accordance with their use of English in the class and comprehending texts without applying Turkish.

Another implication that this study presents is the possible misleading belief that as the 8th graders focus on TEOG exam, they are thought not to benefit from any new applications. In contrast, if the strategies are chosen appropriately and infused into the lessons accurately, students might promote their reading with the help of reading strategies. It is important to keep in my mind that TEOG questions are mainly based on comprehending with various dialogues and reading texts. Consequently, any new application promoting students' use of reading strategies may lead a better exam results.

Thirdly, this study may also shed light on raising language teachers' awareness about foreign language teaching. Implementation of reading strategies in the class work with supporting teamwork, refreshment of classroom applications and various opportunities might provide some advantages not only for the students but also for the teachers. Thus, infusing reading strategies into the lessons may lead teachers to think deeper about target language teaching, expand their professional, practical and academic vision and may encourage them to apply new approaches in a more meaningful setting.

Finally, another implication of this research may emphasize that to prepare the most convenient reading strategy instruction for the learners is challenging for teachers

as most of the classes in Turkey is mixed-ability, which means that students differ from each other in their English language level, motivation, learning styles and background knowledge. Because of those differences, target groups may be considered as risky groups as well in terms of getting reliable results from scientific studies. Therefore, to be capable of determining the most suitable form of strategy training for the learners and the sample group, it is important for teachers to take mentioned difference into consideration.

6.4. Suggestions

This research has raised a few suggestions in need of further investigation. Firstly, the study was conducted with only 27 learners in the 8th grade in Süreyya Nihat Oral Middle School in Adana, Turkey so the results of this study can not be generalized to all eighth grade students in Turkey, therefore, they are only valid for this study sample. Thus, in order to make generalizations, we need to increase the number of the participants. Future research should, therefore, study on the larger sample groups.

Secondly, the study was conducted for only twelve weeks. A further study can be administered longer than that, at least it can continue through the whole academic year. With longer application, instructors can assess participants' improvement of language proficiency and reading strategies use through various exams and assessment tools. In fact, learning a language is a recycling process and accordingly longer implementation of such kind of instructional approach may provide more reliable results.

Thirdly, further investigations can study on the substantivity of reading strategy instruction for future learning. The findings of the present study indicate that students benefit from the strategy instruction in a short term, thus, further study may seek answers whether the outcomes of reading strategy instruction exist for a short time or a long time. In other words, the question of to what extent students internalize the reading strategy use after strategy instruction can be sought answers.

Finally, this study focused on the effect of reading strategy use on TEOG exam result and relatedly foreign language learning in a school context, thus reading texts used in the present study were from the course book of the students. As strategies were studied and applied over those texts in the frame of school context, the effect of reading strategies use on the participants' reading over various texts out of the school context

was not taken into consideration. Therefore, further investigation may be suggested to enlighten the impacts of reading strategies instruction on their general reading comprehension out of school context.

6.5. Limitations

The present research has several limitations. First, the number of the participants in the experimental group was 27 so the results of this study can not be generalized. The number of the participants may be enlarged to a greater number so as to gain more general results. Therefore, the results and findings of this study are only valid for this study. Beside the number of the students, time period in which reading strategy instruction was applied might be for a longer process in terms of getting more reliable results. The study lasted 12 weeks and any implementation in such a short time may not provide various and valid evidence. In a longer period, multiple assessments can be done and relatedly generalization of the findings might be achieved.

Another limitation of this study is the reading strategies survey given to the participants. Surveys may sometimes give misleading results about how often the students use the strategies as they do not assess how they use them, thus true and reliable results through the questionnaires may be questionable. There are various reasons of the mentioned idea, for instance it is possible for the students to grade the items in the survey without being aware of the way about how to use reading strategies. Hence, results of the reading questionnaire of this study may not be generalized and correspondingly can be regarded as valid only for this sample group.

Finally, the findings of this present study reflected the outcomes of reading strategy instruction with regard to school context and therefore the results may not be valid for participants' reading strategy use in other contexts. To gain findings about whether students can use the reading strategies apart from the texts related to the their school context or not would possibly reflect more reliable results. To sum up, the findings of the present study is valid for the sample group in the frame of instruction of reading strategies with the texts from the participants' course book at school.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1. Okuma Stratejileri Anketi¹

Okuma Stratejileri Anketi

Bir metni okurken ne kadar sıklıkla strateji kullandığınızı uygun numarayı yuvarlak içine alarak gösteriniz. 0 “hemen hemen hiç” anlamındayken 5 “hemen hemen daima” anlamına gelmektedir.

1. Metnin içeriğini tahmin etmek için konu başlığını kullanırım.
2. Ne çeşit bir metin olduğunu (gazete makalesi, bilimsel yazı, hikaye, vb) göz önünde bulundururum.
3. Metni önce ana hatlarıyla okurum daha sonra geri döner detaylı bir şekilde okurum.
4. Cümlelerin içindeki sözcük grubu (phrase) ve yan cümlecik (clause) gibi parçalara dikkat ederim.
5. Her bir paragrafın başlangıç ve sonunu dikkatlice okurum.
6. Fiillerin zamanlarına dikkat ederim (genis zaman, geçmiş zaman, vb)
7. Metindeki her kelimenin anlamını kavramaya çalışırım.
8. Metindeki her cümleyi Türkçe’ye çeviririm.
9. Okumaya birinci paragraftan başlayıp metni sonuna kadar okurum
10. Cümle yapılarına (özne, nesne, vb) dikkat ederim.
11. Okurken zorluk yarasam da okumaya devam ederim.
12. Okuma hızımı, metnin zorluk derecesine göre değiştiririm.
13. Metnin zor bölümlerini yüksek sesle okurum.
14. Metnin içindeki bilmediğim kelimeleri atlarım.
15. Metnin içeriğiyle o konuyla ilgili önceden bildiklerim arasında bağlantı kurarım.
16. Bilmediğim bir kelimenin anlamını kelimeyi parçalarına bölerek anlamaya çalışırım.
17. Bir sözcük ya da sözcük grubunu (phrase) anlamadığım zaman, metindeki ipuçlarını kullanarak anlamı tahmin ederim.

¹ It is the translated version of Oxford et al’s (2004) Reading Strategy Questionnaire by Pınar Uzunçakmak and adopted from her master thesis Successful and Unsuccessful Reader’s Use of Reading Strategies, Bilkent University, Ankara.

18. Bir sözcük ya da sözcük grubunu (phrase) anlamadığım zaman, metnin konusuyla ilgili bildiklerimi kullanarak anlamı tahmin ederim.
19. Her bir zamirin (pronoun) neyi kastettiğini kontrol ederim.
20. Önemli yerlerin altını çizerim.
21. Önemli yerleri renkli kalem kullanarak ya da yanına yıldız çizerek işaretlerim.
22. Metnin zor bölümlerini birkaç kere gözden geçiririm.
23. Bütün metni sesli bir şekilde okurum.
24. Metinde anlatılanları kafamda canlandırmaya çalışırım.
25. Metni Türkçe'ye çevirmeden anlamaya çalışırım.
26. Anlamakta zorluk çekersem önceki cümlelere dönerim.
27. Okumakta olduğum satırı parmağımla ya da kalemimle takip ederim.
28. Bir cümleyi gramer kurallarına göre parçalarına ayırmak için çizgiler (/) çizerim.
29. İçindeki bütün kelimeleri bilmeme rağmen bir cümleyi anlayamadıysam, o cümleyi atlarım.
30. Metinde daha sonra neler anlatılacağını tahmin ederim.
31. “Buna rağmen” ve “bunun yanında” gibi bağlaçlara dikkat ederim, böylece cümlelerin yapısını anlayabilirim.
32. Anahtar kelimeleri yazarım.
33. Metindeki her bir paragrafın ana fikrini çıkarmaya çalışırım.
34. Önce soruları okuyup sonra metni okurum.
35. Metni kendi cümlelerimle özetlerim.

Appendix 2. Detailed Process of the Practice

Before Reading: The researcher projected the images of the text on the smart board and encouraged the participants to tell any words or phrase associated with the pictures (**Using background knowledge**). Then she motivated learners to make connection with their previous knowledge to guess the meaning of the unknown word or words in the title. (Predicting meaning through use of background knowledge) For the next step, the researcher emphasized the title of the text and asked students what they knew about the content in the title (**Using background knowledge and using the title to predict the content**). Students wrote what they knew about the content in the title in the mind map prepared and handed out by the researcher beforehand. Then the researcher motivated the participants to read the first and the last sentence of the text (**Skimming**), and write their prediction about the themes of the text in their graphic organizers. The participants wrote their prediction about what the text was about in the graphic organizers and shared their predictions with their deskmate (pair-work) and then with the classroom.

During Reading: The researcher read the text aloud and while reading, she paused after some sentences to encourage learners to predict the meaning of some key words with using clues from the text (**Guessing meaning using clues from the text**). The teacher encouraged learners to think about the content in the sentence or use their background information to predict the meaning of the word. The teacher and the students discussed about the meaning of the word. When the teacher finished reading and demonstrating (The teacher did not demonstrate the application of the strategies after the 4th week as the most of the students learnt the ways to use them, however, depending on the content, for a few times for further weeks, the teacher guided students by demonstrating strategies) how to apply strategies when needed, she allowed one or two, depending on the reading text, of the volunteer students to read the text aloud. While he/she was reading the text aloud, rest of the class was writing the most important parts of the text on the sequence of main idea parts of their graphic organizers (**Figuring out the main ideas**). Then, students were encouraged to share their notes with their deskmate (pair-work) and then with the rest of the classroom. While students were sharing their ideas, the teacher wrote the relevant main ideas from the text on the board. Then students made a group (group-work) and reorganized the main ideas and shared with each other. (After the third week of the implementation, the teacher did not need to write the main ideas on the board as the students were able to do it independently). After that, students matched their predictions they made about the main ideas and the content of the text before reading to the main ideas they wrote after reading so as to see the similarities or differences (it also helped them gain awareness of how strategy application was useful to comprehend the text).

After Reading: After reading, students matched the words with the contextual sentences implying the meaning of the words in the worksheet handed by the researcher beforehand. Then, students wrote the summary of the text (**individual work**) with using the information that they had written on the graphic organizers

(Summarizing). After that, they made a group of four **(group-work)** and exchanged their summaries to give feedback to each other. Later, one of the students was chosen from each group by the group members to read his/her summary to the class and shared their ideas about the summaries.

Follow-up: Participants were handed out one sample question from one of the sample TEOG exams about the same content instructed through the practice and they were encouraged to answer the question using the instructed strategies while choosing the answer **(Individual work)**

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