

THE EFFECT OF THE TIMING OF PRE-READING ACTIVITIES ON
STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF THE TIMING OF PRE-READING ACTIVITIES ON
STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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This study investigated (a) the effects of the timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text, and (b) the students' attitudes to the effectiveness of pre-reading activities with respect to their timing. Two pre-intermediate and two intermediate classes participated in the study. The study used a within-subjects design in which all four classes acted as their own control and experimental groups since they all received both treatments in two weeks. During the two-week study, two texts were used (Text A and B). The pre-reading activities used for each group of students were the same (class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching and video watching). In the first week of the experiment, treatment group A both in the pre-intermediate level and the intermediate level, was given pre-reading activities one day before reading text A, and treatment group B in both levels, was given pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A. In the second week, treatment group A was given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B, and treatment group B was given the pre-reading activities one day before reading text B. After each treatment, the students were asked to write a

summary in their L1 about the texts they had read, as a post-test. Following the treatment, the self-reports of eight randomly chosen participant students in the form of post-treatment semi-structured interviews, were taken to explore their attitudes towards the timing of the pre-reading activities.

The data analysis showed that when pre-reading activities were done immediately before reading a text, the students performed better in their post-tests than when the pre-reading activities were done one day before reading a text. The study also revealed that effective timing of pre-reading activities might be more important for lower level students when a text is difficult. The analysis of the interviews demonstrated that the pre-reading activities that the study used were effective for students' comprehension; the attitudes of the students about the timing of the pre-reading activities were mixed. The interviews also revealed students' different reactions to variations in teaching methods. It was speculated that their different preferences were due to their different learning styles.

Keywords: Pre-reading activities, timing, top-down processing, schema theory, cognitive load theory.

ÖZET

OKUMA ÖNCESİ AKTİVİTELERİNİN ZAMANLAMASININ ÖĞRENCİNİN OKUDUĞUNU ANLAMASI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

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Bu çalışma (a) okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlamasının, okuduğunu anlama üzerindeki etkisini, bu aktiviteleri okumaya başlamadan bir gün önce ya da okumaya başlamadan hemen önce vererek incelemiş ve (b) öğrencilerin okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlaması ile ilgili görüşlerini araştırmıştır. İki alt-orta düzey ve iki orta düzey sınıf çalışmaya katılmıştır. Çalışmaya katılan bu dört sınıf, iki hafta boyunca aynı uygulamalardan geçtiği için, hem kontrol hem de deney grubunu oluşturmaktadırlar. İki hafta süren çalışmada, her sınıfta aynı iki okuma parçası kullanılmıştır (A ve B parçaları). Her grup öğrenciye uygulanan okuma öncesi aktiviteleri de aynıdır (tartışma-beyin fırtınası, kelime eşleştirme, video seyretme). Çalışmanın ilk haftasında, hem alt-orta düzeyden hem de orta düzeyden ilk iki grup öğrenciye, okuma öncesi aktiviteleri, A parçasını okumadan bir gün önce verilmiş, aynı iki düzeyden diğer iki grup öğrenciye ise okuma öncesi aktiviteleri A parçasını okumadan hemen önce verilmiştir. Çalışmanın ikinci haftasında, alt-orta düzeyden ve orta düzeyden ilk iki grup öğrenciye okuma öncesi aktiviteler B parçasını okumaya başlamadan hemen önce verilmiş, aynı iki düzeyden diğer iki grup öğrenciye ise okuma öncesi aktiviteler B parçasını okumadan bir gün önce

verilmiştir. Her uygulamanın sonunda, öğrencilerden, okudukları parçanın Türkçe özetini çıkartmaları istenmiştir. Uygulamanın sonunda, rasgele seçilen sekiz öğrencinin okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlaması ile ilgili düşünceleri hakkında bilgi edinmek için bire bir görüşmeler yapılmıştır.

Araştırma sonuçları, okuma öncesi aktiviteleri, parçayı okumaya başlamadan hemen önce yapan öğrencilerin, parçayı okumadan bir gün önce yapan öğrencilere göre daha iyi performans gösterdiklerini ortaya çıkartmıştır. Ayrıca, okuma parçası zor ise, okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin, etkili bir biçimde zamanlanmasının alt düzeydeki öğrenciler açısından önemli olduğu görülmüştür. Öğrencilerle yapılan bire bir görüşmeler sonucunda ise, çalışmanın kullandığı okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin (tartışma-beyin fırtınası, kelime eşleştirme ve video seyretme) öğrencilerin okuduğunu anlaması üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğu ortaya konmuş ve öğrencilerin okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlaması konusundaki tutumlarının karışık olduğu görülmüştür. Yapılan bire bir görüşmeler aynı zamanda öğrencilerin eğitim metotlarının çeşitliliğine karşı gösterdikleri farklı tepkileri de ortaya çıkartmıştır. Öğrencilerin birbirinden farklı tercihlerinin, farklı öğrenme stillerinden kaynaklandığı düşünülmüştür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Okuma öncesi aktiviteleri, zamanlama, yukardan aşağı işleme, şema teorisi, bilişsel yük teorisi.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Reading has always been a vital and basic skill in which readers' perception and comprehension are essential. In learning a language, the ability to understand a text and interpret it appropriately is a challenging process (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In order to ease this process, before reading a text, language teachers use various kinds of pre-reading activities. With the help of pre-reading activities, teachers can activate the background knowledge of their students on a subject and provide background information about the text which will be read. In this respect, it is beneficial to use pre-reading activities so as to support the process of reading in an effective way. However, teachers may sometimes have difficulty in doing both pre-reading activities and then reading activities in the same class period efficiently. In addition, students may also need some time to process the information given in the pre-reading activities before they start the actual reading process.

This study investigated the effects of the timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text. It also examined the attitudes of the students regarding the timing of pre-reading activities. The findings may be of benefit to EFL teachers in organizing the timing of pre-reading activities to enhance their students' reading comprehension.

Background of the study

Reading is an interactive process (Nuttall, 1996) in which the reader engages in a text with specific purposes in mind, and understands and decodes the language of the writer in order to get the meaning by using her/his background knowledge and experiences. Reading is also regarded as a cognitive process, and cognitive psychologists have analyzed and developed models of this process since the 1960s (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). The metaphorical models of reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002) which explain how reading occurs in the mind are called the bottom-up, top-down and interactive models (Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

While reading a text in a foreign language, the reader undergoes a process in which s/he simultaneously extracts and constructs meaning through interaction and involvement with the written language (Snow, 2002, p. 11). This process is called reading comprehension. In order to comprehend the meaning of a text, it is important for a reader to have background knowledge since a text cannot present all the necessary information to a reader. Thus, background knowledge serves as “conceptual scaffolding” (Koda, 2005, p. 261) which gives assistance to a reader in constructing meaning and interpreting the unfamiliar content and form of a text. Anderson (1999) states that a reader brings all kinds of experience, such as life and educational experiences, knowledge of how texts can be organized rhetorically and of how one’s first and second languages work, and cultural background and knowledge, to a text as part of her/his background knowledge. In the literature, the background knowledge of readers is referred to as schemata (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999). A schema is a mental representation for a general concept which is stored in memory (Ajideh, 2003; Cook, 1997), and created through readers’

experiences with people, objects and events in the world. According to schema theory, which was first developed by the Gestalt psychologist Bartlett, readers combine their already existing schemata with the text they are reading in order to comprehend (Cook, 1997). Effective comprehension can only be attained through this interactive process between the reader and the text (Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Koda, 2005). Schema theory has been one of the major areas for research on second language reading since the 1980s and specific types of schemata, such as content schema and formal schema, have been described (Carrell, 1983a; Carrell, 1983b, Carrell, 1984; Carrell, 1985; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000).

In order to comprehend a text, a reader should have an appropriate schema. If a reader lacks the appropriate schema, it is the teacher's responsibility to provide necessary background information so that the reader gains sufficient knowledge to understand the text. In teaching reading, a teacher should design activities to support students' development of reading ability, and activate their background knowledge or provide necessary background information. Prior to asking to students to read a text, a teacher may use pre-reading activities that help readers establish a purpose for reading, activate existing knowledge about the topic, and establish realistic expectations about what is in the text by previewing (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

According to Chastain (1995), the aim of pre-reading activities is to encourage and to motivate students to read the text and prepare them to be able to read it. Pre-reading activities should activate readers' existing schematic knowledge and also offer compensation for the readers' linguistic or socio-cultural inadequacies.

Auberbach and Paxton (1997) suggest some pre-reading activities that teachers can do before students read a text, such as accessing prior knowledge, writing about an experience related to the topic, asking questions based on the title, semantic mapping, making predictions based on previewing, identifying the text structure, skimming for the general idea, reading the introduction and conclusion, and writing a summary of the article based on previewing (p. 259).

Many researchers in the literature point out the significance and the effectiveness of pre-reading activities (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Auberbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, et al., 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). It is known that pre-reading activities are used in order to activate the background knowledge of students (Carrell, 1984; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, et al., 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995) and present background information about the text which will be read (Carrell, 1984; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, et al., 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995). Pre-reading activities are usually advised to be done immediately before reading a text, and in many textbooks it is suggested that teachers use the pre-reading activities that they present just before reading the text (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Anderson, 1999). However, in my experience as an EFL teacher, it is sometimes difficult for a teacher to do both pre-reading activities and then reading activities in the same class period. In addition, students may need time to process the information presented in the pre-reading activities so that they will have a better understanding of the text when they read it later. This new information should be shaped by the learner to fit with her/his background knowledge, and thus the background knowledge of the learner can be modified to accommodate this new information (Piaget, 1985). It is suggested that

teachers should provide time for students to construct a relationship between the new information presented and the background knowledge that they already have (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). In order to address these concerns, the timing of pre-reading activities needs to be investigated.

Statement of the Problem

The importance and the effectiveness of pre-reading activities in both ESL and EFL contexts have been pointed out by many researchers (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, Pharis & Liberto, 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). The studies show that pre-reading activities are used in order to activate the background knowledge of the students and provide students with the necessary background information about the text before they read. However, in these studies, no attention has been drawn to the timing of pre-reading activities. The possibility that students may need some time to process the information given in the pre-reading activities before reading a text must be taken into consideration. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate the timing of pre-reading activities when they were conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text, in an EFL context. The study also examined the attitudes of students regarding the timing of pre-reading activities.

At Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages, the teachers try to use various kinds of pre-reading activities in their classrooms with the aim of presenting background information to the students or activating the students' background knowledge regarding a text before reading. However, the teachers sometimes have difficulty in doing both pre-reading activities and reading activities efficiently during

a single class period - approximately 40 or 45 minutes. In order to ease scheduling issues and also to draw on the idea that students may need some time to process the information given in the pre-reading activities, some teachers may wish to separate the pre-reading activities and the actual text reading, yet they do not know whether or not this is actually helpful to the students. In this respect, the purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of the timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted one day before reading a text and immediately before reading a text, in order for the teachers at Uludağ University to be able to arrange the activities in their reading courses appropriately.

Research questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect students' reading comprehension?

1. a) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at pre-intermediate level?

1. b) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at intermediate level?

2) What are the students' attitudes regarding the timing of pre-reading activities?

Significance of the study

Although there has been much research conducted on the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension, none has explored the effect of the timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension in an EFL context. The results of this study will fill a gap in the literature and provide empirical

evidence for the varying effectiveness of pre-reading activities on the reading comprehension of students when the timing is varied. The study will also reveal the students' attitudes to the effectiveness of pre-reading activities with respect to their timing. In addition, the study may also help EFL teachers in planning when to use pre-reading activities in their classes.

At the local level, this study attempts to find out whether the timing of pre-reading activities will affect the reading comprehension of the students at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages. The findings may help the teachers of Uludağ University in organizing the timing of pre-reading activities in order to be more effective for students' reading comprehension. The results of the study may be significant not only for the teachers in my institution, but also for the teachers in other institutions in Turkey as it may help them in scheduling their reading courses.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and significance of the problem have been discussed. The next chapter reviews the literature on reading, models of reading, schema theory, memory and the reading process, reading in L2, stages of reading, pre-reading activities, and research on pre-reading activities. In the third chapter, the research methodology, including the participants, instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures, is presented. In the fourth chapter, data analysis procedures and findings are presented. The fifth chapter is the conclusion chapter, which discusses the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2 - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This study set out to investigate the effects of the timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text, in an EFL context. It also examined the students' attitudes to the effectiveness of pre-reading activities with respect to their timing. This chapter will first synthesize the literature on reading by discussing the models of reading, schema theory, memory and the reading process, and then will focus on reading in the first and foreign languages and teaching reading in a foreign language, by pointing out the stages of reading, pre-reading activities, and research on pre-reading activities.

What is Reading?

*Reading is like an infectious disease: it is caught not taught.
(And you can't catch it from someone who hasn't got it...)
(Nuttall, 1996, p. 192).*

The importance of reading in learning a foreign language has always been emphasized and reading has been a rich subject matter for many researchers. Since the act of reading is not completely understood or easily described (Aebbersold & Field, 2003), with the help of new studies and viewpoints, researchers have tried to develop the definition of reading. Widdowson (1984) states that reading is a process of getting information by means of print (p. 213). However, for some researchers, this definition seems too simple since they believe that reading is a more complicated process. From this perspective, reading has been described as a cognitive, social and

interactive process in which the reader, who has specific purposes and aims in mind, understands, comprehends and interprets a written linguistic message given by the writer (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Bernhardt, 1998; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Grellet, 2006). The ability to obtain meaning from written text through interaction and involvement with the written language for some purpose is called reading comprehension. Comprehension of a text can be different depending on the purpose of reading. People generally read for two main reasons, that is, for pleasure and for information (Grellet, 2006, p. 4). When people read, they read for a purpose. This purpose determines how people read a text (Aebersold & Field, 2003). and different kinds of texts require different purposes. Grabe and Stoller (2002) classify these reading purposes under seven main headings: reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, reading to write (or search for information needed for writing), reading to critique texts, and reading for general comprehension (p. 13). In order to comprehend a text efficiently, it is important for readers to have a purpose in mind.

Moreover, readers' familiarity with the text and their motivation also have important roles in the successful comprehension of a text (Butcher & Kintsch, 2003). If readers have background knowledge or any experience related to the subject of the text, and are motivated, then they can understand the text efficiently. While reading a text, successful readers have a purpose in mind and construct meaning from the text by making use of the information in the text, their background knowledge and their experience (Aebersold & Field, 2003).

Successful readers activate two kinds of processes when they read, lower-level processes and higher-level processes (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Birch, 2002).

Lower-level processes are described as “the more automatic linguistic processes and are typically viewed as more skills oriented” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 20), while higher-level processes are described as “the comprehension processes that use the reader’s background knowledge and inferencing skills”(Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 20). Figure 1 shows the reading processes that are activated when we read.

<i>Lower-level processes</i>	<i>Higher-level processes</i>
• <i>Lexical access</i> • <i>Syntactic parsing</i> • <i>Semantic proposition formation</i> • <i>Working memory activation</i>	• <i>Text model of comprehension</i> • <i>Situation model of reader interpretation</i> • <i>Background knowledge use and inferencing</i> • <i>Executive control process</i>

Figure 1 - Reading processes that are activated while reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 20)

For fluent reading comprehension, readers should recognize words rapidly and automatically. In lexical access, readers focus on a word and recognize its meaning in an automatic way. Grabe and Stoller (2002) explain the relationship between word recognition and reading comprehension with an analogy to a car (p. 22). A car is a vehicle that gets you to your destination. In this context, the car is seen as general reading comprehension or understanding of a text. However, the car cannot go anywhere without gasoline since gasoline is the liquid that is needed to run the car. Here, gasoline can be seen as word recognition (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 22). In syntactic parsing, readers put words together so as to elicit basic grammatical information to support clause-level meaning. Syntactic parsing helps readers to clarify the words that have multiple meanings in the context. In the third process, semantic proposition formation, readers combine word meanings and structural information into basic clause-level meaning units (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 23).

They relate the information, which they get by means of recognized words and grammatical cues, to what they have read before. When these three processes, lexical access, syntactic parsing, and semantic proposition formation, function well, they work together in working memory (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

One of the important higher-level processes is a text model of reading comprehension, in which readers build an understanding of the text and develop main ideas. While readers are interpreting the information from the text, they are influenced by their goals, feelings and background knowledge. This interpretation of the reader is called the situation model of reader interpretation. During this interpretation, both background knowledge and inferencing have important roles. If readers interpret the text wrongly or if they have incomplete background knowledge or inferences, they will be misled. Both the text model of reading comprehension and the situation model of reader interpretation require monitoring, and via executive control processing this monitoring can be done. Executive control processing represents the way that readers evaluate their understanding of a text and their success. Readers' evaluation of how well they comprehend the text depends on an executive control processor (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, pp. 28-9).

Having looked at the lower and the higher-level processes in reading, it is convenient to focus on models of the reading process in order to understand the process of reading by means of a reasonable framework. Thus, the following section deals with the models of the reading process.

Models of the Reading Process

Since reading is described as a cognitive process, researchers have tried to understand the reading process that takes place in the human mind (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Over the past three decades, researchers have proposed three kinds of models: bottom-up, top-down and interactive (Samuels & Kamil, 2000). In the bottom-up model (also called the text-based or the data-driven model), the reader starts to decode the text with the smallest unit, which is letters or letter features, and then continues with words, phrases and sentences. The reader accepts the writer of the text as the authority in the bottom-up model (Aebbersold & Field, 2003; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In this model, reading becomes a mechanical and passive process in which the reader creates “a piece by piece mental translation of the information in the text” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 32). The process of constructing the text with the smallest units becomes automatic for skillful and fluent readers, but it is problematic for less skillful or developing readers (Eskey, 2000; Stanovich, 1990) since they need to develop their linguistic ability. In due course, the traditional view of reading as a passive process changed and the contribution of the active reader to the text gained importance. For this reason, the bottom-up model was criticized for underestimating the role of the reader and her/his use of background knowledge (Eskey, 2000).

In the top-down model, also known as Goodman’s model or the reader-driven model, the reader deals with the text as a whole by using her/his background knowledge, expectations and assumptions (Aebbersold & Field, 2003; Hedge, 2000). The top-down model sees the reading process as a cycle, in which the reader “moves from hypothesis to hypothesis” (Urquhart & Weir, 1998, p. 43). In the top-down model, the reader is an active contributor who makes predictions and assumptions

about the text by using her/his background knowledge. The reader is involved in a process called a “psycholinguistic guessing game” (Goodman, 2000, p. 2), in which s/he connects the information in the text with the knowledge s/he brings to the text (Goodman, 2000). Thus, in the top-down model, reading is a matter of bringing meaning to print, not only extracting meaning from print (McCormick, 1988). However, this model was also criticized for working well only to describe skillful and fluent readers who can decode a text automatically, but less well with less proficient and developing readers (Eskey, 2000).

The criticisms towards the bottom-up and the top-down models have led researchers to consider a combination of both. The interactive model stresses that while reading a text, readers use both bottom-up and the top-down processing interactively or at the same time (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Nuttall, 1996). The interactive model emphasizes the importance of both what is written on the page, by starting decoding from the smallest unit, and what the reader brings into the text (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Eskey, 2000; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In the interactive model, the bottom-up and the top-down model can compensate for each other (Nunan, 1998). For instance, if the linguistic ability of a reader is poor, then s/he can use top-down processing to comprehend a text, or if the reader does not have sufficient or necessary background knowledge to understand the text, then s/he can make use of bottom-up processing. The use of interactive processing depends on the type of the text, the background knowledge of readers, language proficiency level, motivation, strategy use and culturally shaped beliefs about reading (Barnett, 1989; Carrell, Devine, & Eskey, 2000). David E. Eskey (2000), who is one of the supporters of the interactive model, states that the model provides “the most

convincing account of [...] the perceptual/cognitive process [...] A major virtue of the interactive model is that it does direct our attention to both the top-down and bottom-up skills that fluent and accurate reading demands” (pp. 98-9). Studies also show that successful and fluent readers use both top-down and bottom-up processing together (Nunes, 1999).

In order to comprehend a text, readers should also use relevant schemata, which are the mental structures in our long-term memory. Using relevant schemata involves using adequate and appropriate background knowledge to understand a reading text, which is also related to top-down processing. In the following section, schema theory will be discussed in detail.

Schema Theory

Proposed by the Gestalt psychologist Barlett in the 1930s, schema theory is a learning theory which deals with the reading process, and in which readers combine their previously acquired knowledge with the information they receive from a text while reading. The previously acquired knowledge is called the background knowledge of the reader, and the previously acquired knowledge structures are called schemata (plural form of “schema”) (Adams & Collins, 1979; Barlett, 1932; Rumelhart, 1980). Rumelhart (1980) defines a schema as:

[a] data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory. There are schemata representing our knowledge about all concepts: those underlying objects, situations, events, sequences of actions. A schema contains, as part of its specification, the network of interrelations that is believed to hold among the constituents of concepts in question. Schema theory embodies a prototype theory of meaning. That is; in as much as a schema underlying a concept stored in memory corresponds to the meaning of that concept, meanings are encoded in terms of the typical or normal situations or events that instantiated that concept. (p. 34)

Therefore, a schema is a mental structure which represents general concepts stored in our long-term memory, and is shaped and created through our experience with people, events, and objects in the world. For instance, a restaurant schema may involve menus, tables, waiters and waitresses, food, and the bill, or a birthday schema may involve a birthday cake, presents, a birthday party, receivers and givers and number of years. A schema can be described as the world knowledge of a reader which enables her/him to create expectations and to make predictions in order to comprehend a text (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Wade, 1990). The gist of schema theory is based on the belief that “every act of comprehension involves one’s knowledge of the world as well” (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977, p. 369). According to researchers, since a text does not carry meaning only by itself, a reader should apply her/his background information (i.e. schema or schemata), or use her/his information, knowledge, emotions and culture in order to make the text more meaningful and comprehensible (Anderson, 1999; Brown, 2001; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Cook, 1997; Garner, 1988; Grabe, 1991; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Koda, 2005; Nunan, 1998; Stott, 2001; Urquhart & Weir, 1998; Wallace, 2003). If a reader does not use her/his previous experiences, attitudes, conceptual understandings, values and skills, then s/he has problems in comprehending a text (Vacca & Vacca, 1993). Comprehension problems may also occur when the reader does not have the appropriate schemata; or when the reader may have the appropriate schemata, but the clues that are provided by the author may be insufficient to suggest them; or when the reader may find a consistent interpretation of the text, but may not find the one that is intended by the author (Rumelhart, 1980, p. 48). In this last case,

the reader will understand the text, yet s/he will misunderstand the author. In relation to the comprehension of the text, Anderson and Pearson (2000) state:

To say that one has comprehended a text is to say that she has found a mental “home” for the information in the text, or else that she has modified an existing mental home in order to accommodate that new information. (p. 37)

In the literature, schema theory has been the focus of research in second language reading since the 1980s (Anderson & Pearson, 2000; Carrell, 1981; Carrell, 1983a; Carrell, 1983b, 1987; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Chen & Graves, 1995; Hudson, 2000; Koh, 1986; Steffensen & Joag-Dev, 1984). The studies mainly deal with two types of schemata: content and formal. Content schema refers to a reader’s general knowledge about people, cultures, the world, the universe or the knowledge of the content area of a text (Brown, 2001; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000). In order to comprehend a text, a reader should have knowledge of the topic of the text and the culturally specific elements that are needed to interpret it. According to Aebbersold and Field (2003), “if the topic is outside the readers’ experience or base of knowledge, they are adrift on an unknown sea” (p. 41). Content schema is also a part of a reader’s cultural orientation. While reading a text, this cultural orientation of the reader plays an important role in understanding and comprehending the text. For this reason, the reader may have problems if her/his schema is culturally different from the one that is proposed by the text (Al-Issa, 2006). Carrell and Eisterhold (2000) also explain one of the reasons that a particular content schema may not exist for a reader by stating that it may be culturally specific and not a part of particular readers’ cultural background (p. 80).

One of the outstanding and significant studies conducted on content schemata was the study by Steffensen, Joag-Dev and Anderson (1979) . The study examined

two groups of participants from different cultural heritages, a group of Asian Indians living in the USA and a group of Americans. Each participant was asked to read and recall two personal letters, both of which had similar rhetorical organization, but different cultural contents (one described an Indian wedding, and the other described a traditional American wedding). Both the Indian and the American groups read the material related with their own cultural background faster and recalled the content better. This study was important in showing the influence of cultural content schemata on reading comprehension. Similar results have been found with Turkish students (Bedir, 1992; Razi, 2004).

Formal schema, on the other hand, refers to the knowledge of the formal and rhetorical organization of different types of texts (Carrell, 1987; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Grabe, 1991; Klapper, 1992; Singhal, 1998; Stott, 2001). A reader's knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and structure of the text comprises her/his formal schema. If a reader knows how a text is organized structurally and formally, then this will help her/him to understand the text better. One of the notable studies conducted on formal schema was a study by Carrell (1984). Carrell (1984) suggested that reading could be facilitated if readers knew the types of rhetorical organization used in English texts. In her study, 80 students of English from different language backgrounds (mainly Spanish, Arabic and Oriental) were asked to read and recall four versions of a text, each of which contained the same content information but with different organizational structures: description, cause-effect, problem-solution, and comparison. The findings of the study showed that if the readers possessed the appropriate formal schema related with the text that they read, more information could be retrieved from the text (p. 460).

Both content and formal schemata affect reading comprehension performances (Koda, 2005; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). If one of these schemata are lacking in readers, a teacher can help by providing them with the necessary background information so that the readers will have sufficient knowledge to comprehend a text. A teacher can preview the text, identify the type of the text (narrative, compare-contrast, cause-effect, and problem solution) and point out the structures for organizing such texts for the readers, if they do not have the formal schema (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Carrell, 1984). When content schema is lacking, a teacher should provide the necessary background information before the students read the text (Hudson, 2000). In order to activate or provide schemata, the teacher may also use pre-reading activities. Lectures, visual aids, demonstrations, discussions, role-plays, text-previewing, introduction and discussion of key vocabulary, key-word, and key-concept association activities can help teachers to construct or provide relevant schemata for the readers before reading a text (Carrell, 2000, pp. 245-46).

In order to understand the activation of the relevant schemata in readers' minds and how the new information received via pre-reading activities is processed in readers' working memory, it is important to understand the relationship between memory and the reading process. This will be the focus of the next section.

Memory and the Reading Process

The realization of the reading process is closely related with memory. In order to understand the relation between the reading process and memory, it is appropriate to define the types of memory that are involved in this process. To start with, short-term memory refers to the memory that holds a small amount of

information for periods of time up to a few seconds (Cook, 1991). Long-term memory, on the other hand, is a kind of memory which can hold a large amount of information and lasts for a long period of time, as long as decades (Cook, 1991). The knowledge stored in long-term memory affects our perceptions of the world and influences what information in the environment we attend to (O'Malley & Chamot, 1995). Our background knowledge dwells in long-term memory (Cantor & Engle, 1993). In this respect, long-term memory provides a framework to which we connect new information. A term coined by Baddeley and Hitch (1974) and generally preferred to short-term memory (Grabe & Stoller, 2002), working memory is often defined as a part of long-term memory (Cowan, 1995, 2005), and it refers to “the information that is activated, or given mental stimulation, for immediate storage and processing” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 18). It is the system which keeps information in an active state in order to support on-line processing and includes the concurrent processing and storage of information (Baddeley, 1986; Goff, 2004; Just & Carpenter, 1992).

According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), the relationship between the reading process and our memory can be explained in two ways. First of all, while reading a text, readers not only recognize words very rapidly and keep them active in their working memory, but also analyze the structure of sentences in order to “assemble the most logical clause-level meanings, building a main-idea model of text comprehension in [their] heads, monitoring comprehension and so on” (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 18). The combination of these skills in an efficient way affects the general comprehension of a text, and takes a long time to master. Secondly, the reader's background knowledge that resides in long-term memory should interact

with the linguistic information in the text (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In order to interpret the reading material effectively, the linguistic information in the text and the background knowledge of the reader are crucial.

Weinstein and Mayer (1986) state that new information is acquired through a four-stage encoding process: selection, acquisition, construction and integration.

Before reading a text, the information that a reader receives in the context of pre-reading activities should undergo these processes. O'Malley and Chamot (1995) give a brief description of these processes:

Through selection, learners focus on specific information [...] and transfer that information into working memory. In acquisition, learners actively transfer information from working memory into long-term memory for permanent store. In the third stage, construction, learners build internal connections between ideas contained in working memory. The information from long-term memory can be used to enrich the learner's understanding or retention of the new ideas by providing related information or schemata into which the new ideas can be organized. In the final process, integration, the learner actively searches for background knowledge in long-term memory and transfers this knowledge to working memory. (p. 18)

It is understood that the amount of information learned is determined in the selection and acquisition processes, and the organization of the new information occurs in the construction and integration processes (O'Malley & Chamot, 1995).

In the light of what has been discussed above, before reading a text, a teacher should check what readers know about the reading material through pre-reading activities. In this way, readers can make connections and associations with the information they get via pre-reading activities and keep them actively in their working memory, and the background knowledge stored in their long-term memory. The more associations readers can make with the new information and their background knowledge, the easier their comprehension of the text will be. However,

if readers do not have the background knowledge related to the reading material, they have to spend more effort on understanding the topic of the reading material, and there will be more information processing demands in their working memory.

Understanding a text can be difficult because of the readers' limited processing capacity (Turner & Engle, 1989). If the effort to understand the topic of the text is added to the usual information processing demands of reading, then the load on the working memory of readers is higher. This load on the working memory is called cognitive load. According to cognitive load theory, some texts necessitate more information processing demands on working memory than others if the topic is not familiar for readers (Chandler & Sweller, 1991; Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998). For instance, the cognitive load is low for a text about lightning formation when a reader has some background knowledge about the subject, whereas the cognitive load is high if the reader does not have any background knowledge (McCrudden, Schraw, Hartley, & Kiewra, 2004). Therefore, the more new connections with given information the reader has to make in a short time, the more difficult it is to process that information in working memory. More time may be needed to build a relationship between the information given and the already constructed background knowledge (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). From a pedagogical point of view it can be said that teachers should give their students time to make connections with the information that will be given in pre-reading activities (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

Having described the overall reading process, which is applicable to reading in both L1 and L2, it is appropriate now to focus on reading in the L2 setting. Thus,

the next section will focus on reading in L2 by making comparisons with reading in L1.

Reading in the First and the Foreign Languages

Reading is a complex process and reading in a second language makes this process even more complex not only for readers themselves, but also for researchers. However, the studies on L1 reading have guided researchers and helped them to understand L2 reading. Although L1 and L2 reading have some similar characteristics, it can be said that the differences between them are greater. Grabe and Stoller (2002) have divided the differences between L1 and L2 reading under three general headings: linguistic and processing differences, individual and experiential differences, and socio-cultural and institutional differences.

First of all, the linguistic and processing differences between L1 and L2 readers show that L2 readers can deal with a reading text with their previously gained linguistic knowledge of L1. L2 readers can transfer their reading skills in L1 while reading a text in L2. However, L2 readers have to extend their previously gained linguistic knowledge, try to deal with negative transfer effects, and learn to use specific resources (translation, glosses, bilingual dictionaries) while reading in L2 (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In addition, L2 readers need some knowledge of structural and textual organization in L2 for effective comprehension (Alderson, 2000; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Alexander and Jetton (2000) also state that “knowledge of text genres and structures allows readers to access information more readily and accurately, as they construct their personal interpretations of the text” (p. 292).

In addition, L1 and L2 readers differ in terms of the amount of vocabulary they know. L1 readers approach a reading text with some knowledge of vocabulary that they have learned indirectly in their daily lives, whereas L2 readers, especially in an EFL context, may not have a sufficient amount of vocabulary to understand the text at first sight.

Furthermore, L2 readers may start reading texts in L2 after they have learned literacy skills and content knowledge in L1 for several years (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). As a result, it can be said that L2 readers have the awareness of how they have learned to read and the learning strategies that they have used in L1 reading. Although they cannot transfer all the reading strategies, they can easily bring their metalinguistic awareness and knowledge to understand a text in L2.

Moreover, for L2 readers, the total amount of exposure to L2 print in order to develop fluency and accuracy is lower than for L1 readers. Most L2 readers are simply not exposed to enough L2 print to build fluency (Koda, 1996).

In L2 reading, L2 proficiency plays an important role and researchers have discussed this issue in the context of the Language Threshold Hypothesis. The Language Threshold Hypothesis states that L2 readers must have enough L2 knowledge of vocabulary and structure (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In this way, L1 reading strategies and skills can be used effectively in order to comprehend a text in L2. Alderson (2000) states:

The clear conclusion of [L1 reading versus L2 knowledge] studies is that second language knowledge is more important than first language reading abilities, and that a linguistic threshold exists which must be crossed before first-language ability can transfer to the second language reading context. However, it is clear that this linguistic threshold is not absolute but must vary by task: the more demanding the task, the higher the linguistic threshold. (pp. 38-9)

According to the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis, which is seen as the opposing view to Language Threshold Hypothesis, a certain amount of knowledge of L1 and the strategies which are developed in L1 reading can be positively transferred during the process of L2 reading (Bernhardt, 1998). In the literature, there are studies that support both the Language Threshold Hypothesis and the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis. In Carrell's study (1991), the findings showed that both L1 reading and L2 proficiency contributed significantly to the readers' L2 reading. Brisbois (1992) conducted a study on literacy interdependence and the linguistic threshold, and found that L1 reading ability and L2 proficiency together play a role in successful L2 reading. In this respect, it can be said that both Carrell's and Brisbois' studies have provided evidence for both the Language Threshold Hypothesis and the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis.

In addition to linguistic and processing differences, there are also individual and experiential differences, and socio-cultural and institutional differences between L1 and L2 readers (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). First of all, L2 readers are affected by their levels of L1 reading abilities. L2 readers may have L1 literacy abilities that are too weak to be able to transfer many supporting resources to L2 reading contexts (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). In addition, L2 readers' motivations for reading can differ, and they may also have different senses of self-esteem, interests, emotional responses to reading, and involvement with reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p. 56). Furthermore, there is a difference between L1 and L2 readers in terms of the text types that they are exposed to. L2 readers are less likely to be exposed to the full range of texts that are commonly read by L1 readers. Additionally, the socio-cultural backgrounds of L2 readers can also be different and affect their reading. Alderson

(2000) states that while some cultures respect the printed word more, and implicitly accept it as authority without questioning, others have fears about the implications of putting any opinions in print (p. 25). As a final point, it can be said that the expectations of L2 educational institutions can differ and have an influence on L2 readers.

When teaching reading, L2 teachers keep these differences in mind since they are important factors to consider. In the next section, how reading is taught in L2 will be discussed further.

Teaching Reading in a Foreign Language

For many students, reading a text in a second language is a challenging process and hard to cope with. Teaching this skill in a proper way eases this process and helps students have a better understanding of reading material. In teaching reading, a teacher makes use of many kinds of activities while dividing the reading process into three stages: the pre-reading stage, the while reading stage and the post-reading stage (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

Pre-reading stage

In the pre-reading stage, the aim of the teacher is to prepare the students for the text that they are going to read. According to Aebersold and Field (2003), there are three main reasons for preparing the students to read, which are:

to establish a purpose for reading a given text, to activate existing knowledge about the topic and thus get more out of reading the text, and to establish realistic expectations about what is in the text and thus read more effectively. (p. 66)

To establish a purpose before starting to read a text is important in order to comprehend a text efficiently. While establishing a purpose for reading, students'

language and proficiency levels should be taken into consideration by teachers, and then teachers should decide on suitable activities for the students to complete (Aebersold & Field, 2003). With the help of questions and class discussions, teachers can develop a purpose for reading a text, or students can establish their own purposes (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999).

It has been pointed out by many researchers that readers' background knowledge is one of the fundamental factors in the reading process (Anderson, 1999; Grabe, 1991; Grellet, 2006; Koda, 2005; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Owing to this fact, it is important for teachers to design and use activities that can activate the background knowledge of students. These activities may include brainstorming, semantic mapping, asking questions based on the title, writing your way into reading (writing about the reader's own experiences related to the topic), making predictions based on previewing, identifying the text structure, skimming for the general idea, writing a summary of the article based on previewing (Aubersbach & Paxton, 1997, p. 259), and vocabulary pre-teaching, which will be discussed in detail later in the literature review.

While-reading stage

In the while-reading stage, the aim of the teachers is to encourage students to be active as they read. At this stage, students are required to follow the order of ideas in the text, to react to the opinions expressed in the text, to understand and infer the information the text contains, to ask themselves questions, to take notes on the main points of the text, to confirm their expectations or background knowledge, and to predict the next part of the text from various clues (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

During reading, students use both bottom-up and top-down strategies interactively. While bottom-up strategies help readers to comprehend a text sentence by sentence, top-down strategies aid readers in comprehending larger pieces of the text, such as paragraphs or sections (Aebersold & Field, 2003). While reading, students should monitor their own comprehension of a text, and ask themselves questions about whether their expectations and background knowledge are confirmed. If students have some problems in understanding a text during reading, teachers can use a while-reading activity, in which students make predictions about the next action in the text (Aebersold & Field, 2003). Aebersold and Field (2003) also state that these activities are “generally more useful for readers at the intermediate and advanced levels and aren’t as productive for students at lower levels of language proficiency, who are probably interrupting their own reading quite a bit anyway” (p. 111).

Post-reading stage

In this last stage, teachers assess readers’ comprehension of a text or continue to build their comprehension by using activities which require readers to reflect on the main ideas, to share ideas, to return to the text in order to get more information, and to make connections between the newly learned information and previous knowledge (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

Asking reading comprehension questions is one of the most preferred post-reading activities in order to see the general comprehension of a reading text, and to review the information from the text. Another post-reading activity, which has a long history in ESL/EFL teaching, is to have students write a summary about the text they have read (Aebersold & Field, 2003). By asking the students to write a quick

summary in 10 or 15 minutes, teachers can “get the students to review mentally the information in an overt manner” (Aebersold & Field, 2003, pp. 123-4).

Since the main purpose of this study is the timing of the pre-reading activities, there is a need to understand what kind of pre-reading activities can be done by the teachers in the classroom. The following section will focus on the types of pre-reading activities that can be done before reading a text.

Pre-reading Activities

Pre-reading activities, as the name suggests, are a type of activities that are done prior to reading a text. According to Moorman and Blanton (1990), pre-reading activities have four goals: “to activate, develop or provide general background knowledge, to activate or provide background knowledge of the text structure, to introduce key vocabulary, and to establish a purpose for reading” (p. 176).

A teacher should activate students’ background knowledge or provide background information before reading a text if the students lack necessary background knowledge. Pre-reading activities should prepare students to read the text and contribute to their reading comprehension. These activities not only facilitate comprehension of a text and help students make predictions about what they are going to read, but also make the reading process more enjoyable, more meaningful and easier for them. Many researchers have pointed out the importance and effectiveness of pre-reading activities in both ESL and EFL contexts (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell & Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Urquhart & Weir, 1998).

In a classroom, a teacher may use various kinds of pre-reading activities. One type of pre-reading activity is using overviews. A teacher can present an overview of the topic of a text that is going to be read to her/his students in order to activate their background knowledge or provide background information. According to Chamot and O'Malley (1994), overviews provide students with a general understanding of major points that they are going to read, and how these points are interrelated (p. 34). However, the presentation of a large amount of information with overviews is not recommended. In order to give students a chance to use and contemplate the new information, a teacher should include activities with the presentation of information (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

Another type of pre-reading activity is prediction. This activity helps students activate their background knowledge and serves as a guide for processing information while reading. According to Grabe (1991), prediction helps students anticipate later text development by allowing them to evaluate the previous information, and understand the intention of the writer better, and helps them decide whether the information is useful or not.

Brainstorming is also used as a pre-reading activity. In brainstorming, students examine the title of the reading text and try to use their background knowledge and opinions to list all the information that comes to their mind (Wallace, 2003). The list can also be organized and placed on a mind map (Pate, 1995; Readence, Moore, & Rickelman, 2002). In order for students to activate their background knowledge, semantic mapping can also be used as a pre-reading activity (Readence, et al., 2002; Vacca & Vacca, 1993). In semantic mapping, the teacher draws a circle at the center of a board and writes the main idea in the center of the

circle. Then students try to list information related to the main idea by providing key words or phrases. In this way, students can make associations or provide new ideas related to the topic. Heimlich and Pittelman (1986) support the advantages of using semantic mapping by saying:

Semantic mapping appears to motivate students of all age levels and to involve them actively in the thinking-reading process... The semantic mapping process facilitates text comprehension in that it draws upon and capitalizes on the categorical nature of memory. During semantic mapping, the topic (word or words) triggers the brain to retrieve information being stored in memory. When this knowledge is activated and applied to the text, a link is made between past experiences and text concepts. The process of semantic mapping also allows teachers to assess and interpret what students know as well as to make judgments concerning the appropriate instruction needed. These judgments can be based upon what students demonstrate they already know about a topic, rather than teachers having to assume what students know. (p. 45-46)

Similar to semantic maps, graphic organizers, which are known as structured overviews (Readence, et al., 2002), can be used as a pre-reading activity in the classroom. Graphic organizers (Ausubel, 1960) are in the form of schematic diagrams and present major concepts and additional terms, which give information to students before they start reading (Readence, et al., 2002). In order to use graphic organizers, first of all, a teacher should identify the major objectives and concepts to be taught. Then students may try to arrange the key terms into a diagram and find the relationship between and among the terms. Graphic organizers are helpful to students in activating their background knowledge about a topic, and can also be used by students to reflect on and evaluate what they have learned (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

Created by Ogle (1986), the K-W-L chart is also used as a pre-reading activity in order to activate students' background knowledge in a graphic way. A teacher can give a K-W-L chart to students in which the students first write what they

“Know” about the topic that they are going to read. Then they list the information that they “Want” to know about the topic in the chart. In the final step, after students read the text, they add information about what they “Learned” on the topic (Readence, et al., 2002). Although their effectiveness has not been supported by a sufficient amount of empirical research, K-W-L charts have been recommended by teaching professionals (Carr & Ogle, 1987; Fisher, Frey, & Williams, 2002).

Asking questions before reading is a type of pre-reading activity that teachers generally use. Nowadays, in many textbooks and reading materials, questions often precede the text and function as a pre-reading activity before students start reading the material (Ajideh, 2003). The questions that teachers ask before reading must provide specific cues and information for students, and activate their background knowledge about the topic so that they can comprehend the text better.

Teachers may also use visual materials, such as showing pictures which are related to the reading text, in order to make their students familiar with the subject of a text. The effectiveness of previewing has also been pointed out by researchers (Swaffar, Arens, & Byrones, 1991; Taglieber, Johnson, & Yarbrough, 1988). By looking at contextual clues, titles, and headings, students can draw inferences before reading a text. Swaffar, et al., (1991) suggest that identification of the text genre is also an important previewing activity. With the help of previewing activities, students make predictions and guesses about the subject of a reading text.

Writing a summary before reading may also be used by teachers as a pre-reading activity. Readence, et al. (2002) suggest that having students write what they know about a topic before reading enhances reading comprehension and retention.

Another pre-reading activity is using anticipation guides, in which key topics of the reading material are introduced (Head & Readence, 1992). According to Head and Readence (1992), in order to create an effective anticipation guide, a teacher should first provide a list of three to five controversial statements about the main topic of a reading text. The statements should all be taken from the main points of the reading material, and designed with the goal of challenging students' beliefs about the topic, and should motivate them to read more. In the next step, students write down whether they agree or disagree with each statement under a column marked "before reading". Then the class starts a discussion on their individual responses. During this discussion process, not only is the background knowledge of the students activated, but also students anticipate the information that they are about to read, and develop their critical thinking skills. Students start reading the text after the initial discussion, and then refer back to their anticipation guide in order to go through the same statements. They write whether they still agree or disagree with each statement under the "after reading" column (Head & Readence, 1992; Readence, et al., 2002).

Teachers may also prefer to pre-teach the vocabulary that they think their students may have problems with during reading. However, it is thought by many researchers that pre-teaching vocabulary is not that effective for students' comprehension of a text (Akagawa, 1992; Alessi & Dwyer, 2008; Hudson, 2000; Taglieber, et al., 1988). In the following section, more details will be given about the studies on pre-teaching vocabulary and other pre-reading activities.

Pre-reading Activities Research

It is generally agreed that pre-reading activities enhance reading comprehension. There are many studies in the literature that have concentrated on pre-reading activities and their effectiveness on reading comprehension. Carrell, et al. (1989) examined the effectiveness of two pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension. The study was conducted with 26 intermediate level ESL students coming from different social and cultural backgrounds. The participants were given training on semantic mapping and the experience-text-relationship (ETR) method. In the ETR method, the teacher first asked questions to the students and activated their background knowledge so that the students could make predictions about the text. Then the teacher had the students read short parts of the text and asked questions again. In the final step, the teacher asked the students to draw relationships between the content of the text and their own experience. The findings of the study showed that the students who received semantic mapping or ETR method training performed better in post-tests when compared to the control group. This study was significant in showing the effectiveness of these two different pre-reading activities.

Chen and Graves (1995) examined the effects of previewing and providing cultural background knowledge. The study was conducted with 240 Taiwanese college freshmen. They were given two American short stories, and received either cultural background knowledge or previewing as a pre-reading activity, or both. The results of the study showed that while previewing was effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension, providing cultural background proved only somewhat effective. Although receiving both treatments was also effective for

students' reading comprehension, previewing was significantly more effective to enhance students' reading comprehension.

Another study conducted by Karakaş (2005) also showed the effectiveness of previewing for reading comprehension. The study investigated the effects of two different pre-reading activities, previewing and brainstorming-class discussion, and was conducted with 49 Turkish ELT trainee teachers. The researcher used both previewing and brainstorming for one group of students and only brainstorming for the other group of students. The findings of the study revealed that students who received a combined treatment (previewing and brainstorming) achieved better reading comprehension results than the students who did only brainstorming before reading the text. Like Chen and Graves' study (1995), this study is also important in showing the importance of previewing as a pre-reading activity.

In a recent study conducted by O'Brien (2007), the effectiveness of K-W-L charts and anticipation guides was analyzed. The participants of the study were from different Asian countries and studied English as a foreign language. The researcher chose four stories from the Bible and altered them in order to make the stories less challenging for the students. The findings of the study showed that there was no significant difference in the reading comprehension test results of the students when they received K-W-L charts and when they received anticipation guides as pre-reading activities. However, the results of students' critical lesson reflections suggested the effectiveness of both pre-reading activities.

A study by Taglieber, Johnson, and Yarbrough (1988) analyzed the effectiveness of three pre-reading activities: pictorial context, vocabulary pre-teaching and pre-questioning. The study was conducted with 40 undergraduate

Brazilian EFL students who were given four different reading passages. The results of the study showed that the experimental group, who received these three kinds of pre-reading activities before reading the passages, had higher reading comprehension scores than the control group. However, pictorial context and pre-questioning were found to be more effective than vocabulary pre-teaching in facilitating text comprehension.

The effectiveness of vocabulary pre-teaching has also been examined by other researchers. Akagawa (1992) investigated the effects of two pre-reading activities, visual presentation and vocabulary pre-teaching, on reading comprehension. She conducted her study with Japanese high school students, and measured text comprehension by a recall task and an open-ended question test. The results of the recall task showed no significant differences between the two conditions. However, the group who received the visual presentation before reading the text outperformed the group who received vocabulary pre-teaching in the open-ended question test. In a different study by Hudson (2000), in which 93 ESL students participated, nine reading texts of three different levels were used. One of the groups was first shown the title of the text and six pictures portraying the plot. The students were asked 23 questions about the title and the pictures for open discussion. Then they wrote their predictions about the content of the reading passage. The other group received a list of 23 vocabulary items with their definitions that would appear in the reading text. The results of the multiple choice comprehension questions showed that the group who were shown the title and six pictures about the text had better scores than the group who received vocabulary pre-teaching. Here, it is important to point out that the result of this particular study may have been predicted

even without conducting a study. Giving a list of words and their definitions cannot be counted as a vocabulary pre-teaching activity since there is no teaching. If students do not know the words or cannot understand their definitions, there is nothing left to make them activate their background knowledge. Moreover, this kind of activity does not require any processing demands from the students since everything is already given. However, the activities that the other group of students received during the study made the result more obvious since before reading the text they had done many activities to activate their background knowledge.

Tetsuhito (1994) also conducted a study on vocabulary pre-teaching and schema activation. She found that vocabulary pre-teaching was more effective than schema activation on students' reading comprehension. According to Tetsuhito (1994), the reason for the ineffectiveness of vocabulary pre-teaching in the previous studies was directly related to the number of words and the length of the reading text. She stated that the number of the pre-taught words in the previous studies was too high in relation to the length of the reading texts. Therefore, in her study she tried to balance the number of pre-taught words and the length of the reading texts, and thus showed the importance of vocabulary pre-teaching (Tetsuhito, 1994).

It is apparent from these results of the studies in the literature that pre-reading activities have crucial roles before starting to read a text and add more to students' comprehension of a text. The studies also show that some pre-reading activities may be more effective than others, such as in Chen & Graves' (1995), Taglieber et al.'s (1988), Akagawa's (1992) and Tetsuhito's (1994) studies, and that some pre-reading activities may be more effective if they are given in a combined way, as described in the studies of Karakaş (2005) and Taglieber et al (1988).

Considering the effectiveness of pre-reading activities for the overall comprehension of a text, many textbooks and institutions generally advise teachers to do pre-reading activities just before reading a text. However, sometimes it is difficult for a teacher to do both pre-reading activities and then reading activities in the same class period. Moreover, as cognitive load theory suggests, doing both pre-reading activities and reading activities in the same class period may require more effort on the part of the students and may put too heavy a load on their working memory. Students may need time to comprehend the information presented by pre-reading activities in order to build a relationship between the newly presented information and the background knowledge they have so that they have a better understanding of the text when they read it later. In order to address these concerns, the timing of pre-reading activities needs to be investigated. Previously, no studies have been conducted about the effectiveness of pre-reading activities when their timing is varied. Therefore, the study described in this thesis is unique in investigating the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on EFL students' reading comprehension when they are conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text.

Conclusion

In this literature review, many areas have been covered, such as what reading is, models of reading, schema theory, memory and the reading process, reading in L2, stages of reading, pre-reading activities, and research on pre-reading activities. As a conclusion, this literature review has suggested that pre-reading activities play an important role in enhancing students' reading comprehension by activating their background knowledge, providing background information and by helping them

make guesses and predictions about the text that they are going to read. However, students may need time to comprehend and process the information presented by pre-reading activities so that they will comprehend a reading text better when they read it later. Thus, it is important for teachers to take the timing of the pre-reading activities into consideration in their classrooms.

The study that is described in this thesis will fill a gap in the literature by exploring the effects of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when the timing is varied. In the next chapter, the research tools and methodological procedures followed will be discussed. In addition, information about the setting and the participants will be provided.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The first aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of pre-reading activities when they were conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text. In addition, the study was intended to explore the attitudes of students regarding the timing of pre-reading activities. During the study, the researcher attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect students' reading comprehension?
 1. a) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at pre-intermediate level?
 1. b) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at intermediate level?
2. What are the students' attitudes regarding the timing of pre-reading activities?

In this chapter, the setting, the participants and the instruments of the study will be described, and information about the data collection procedures and data analysis will be given.

Setting

This study was carried out at Bursa Uludağ University, School of Foreign Languages (UUSFL) in the second term of the 2008-2009 Academic year. UUSFL provides compulsory intensive English language education for one academic year. Before the beginning of the academic year, all incoming students are given a

placement test. If they score 60 out of 100 on the placement test, they have the right to take the proficiency test afterwards. In order to pass the proficiency test and earn the right to go to their own departments, students have to score 70 out of 100 on the proficiency test. If the students are not able to score 70, then they are placed in an appropriate level among the three levels, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, and Intermediate, according to the results of the original placement test.

At UUSFL, an academic year is divided into two terms, 32 weeks in total. Students attend classes 30 hours a week in the elementary level, 25 hours a week in the pre-intermediate level, and 22 hours a week in the intermediate level. During the 32 weeks of instruction, students take main course, grammar, reading and writing lessons. Listening and vocabulary skills are included in the main course lesson. The intermediate level students also have speaking lessons, unlike the other two levels. Each week, while the pre-intermediate level students take four hours of reading, the intermediate level students take three hours of reading. In the reading classes, teachers use some pre-reading activities, such as previewing, predicting, class discussion-brainstorming, semantic mapping, questioning and vocabulary pre-teaching. One reading course book is used throughout the year and there is not a separate reading assessment test for the reading course; reading is only assessed via midterms.

Participants

The participants in the study were two teachers and originally 126 EFL students in four intact classes. However, of the 126 students, only 65 of them completed all activities for both readings, due to absenteeism. Of these 65 students, 27 were from two pre-intermediate classes, and 38 were from two intermediate

classes. Of these 65 students, 31 were female and 34 were male; 26 of them were 19 years old and 31 were 20 years old. The remaining eight students were between the ages of 18-26.

The classes (pre-int-2, pre-int-7, int-8 and int-7) were chosen after all the programs of the teachers at UUSFL were investigated by the researcher. Two teachers who had two reading classes and whose classes were on consecutive days (for instance; on Mondays and on Tuesdays for one class, on Wednesdays and on Thursdays for the other class) were chosen so that the teachers could give the pre-reading activities one day before reading the texts. The background information about the participant teachers (PT 1 and PT 2) is given in Table 1:

	PT 1	PT 2
Gender	Male	Male
Total years of teaching experience	9 years	7 years
Years of teaching experience at UUSFL	4 years	5 years
Degree programs	MA	MA
Having taught reading before	Yes	Yes

Table 1 - Background information about the participant teachers (PT)

As the participant students in this study were from two different levels, it would be possible to see the differences, if any, in students' reading comprehension at different proficiency levels when the timing of the pre-reading activities is taken into consideration. The study used a within-subjects design in which the same group of subjects serves in more than one treatment (Aron & Aron, 2003). In the study, all four classes received both treatments and they all act as their own control and

experimental groups. This kind of design was chosen to accomplish the aim of the study with a smaller number of participants and to control the individual factors.

In order to ensure that the level of proficiency in English of the two classes in each proficiency level was equal, the classroom averages of the students' grades (65 students) from their four midterms were taken into account before conducting the experiment. The means of the 65 students' midterm results in both the two pre-intermediate classes and the two intermediate classes were compared by using Mann-Whitney U tests to see the difference between them. Non-parametric statistical methods were chosen because the data are not normally distributed and the groups are small and of uneven sizes. It was found that there was no significant difference between the two pre-intermediate classes or between the two intermediate classes in terms of midterm grades. The first term midterm results for the 65 students in four intact classes can be seen in Table 2 below:

	Pre-int-7 N*= 16	Pre-int-2 N= 11	Int-8 N=17	Int-7 N=21
Median	40.00	40.00	39	37
Mean	40.18	39.63	37.05	36.61
SD*	3.25	2.41	4.70	3.29
<i>Mann-Whitney U test results</i>	$U= 80.5, p > .05, r= -.07$		$U= 150.5, p > .05, r= -.13$	

*SD: Standard Deviation *N= number of students

Table 2 - First term midterm results for 65 students in four intact classes

Instruments

The instruments in this study were two different reading texts that were used during the experiment, a post-test, and post-treatment semi-structured interviews.

Reading texts

The same reading texts were used for both the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. The two texts were chosen from a reading textbook called *Reading for the Real World 1* (Malarcher & Janzen, 2004). In order for the reading texts to be equal and suitable for the two levels and for the study, some changes were made in the original versions of the texts. The changes that were made included the length, readability and the vocabulary profile of the texts. In the study, more time was given to the pre-reading activities and writing a summary, and it was thought that students could read the texts in 10 minutes along with taking notes. For this reason, the texts had to be shorter. The original text A was 559 words and the original text B was 575 words. In order to shorten the texts, some sentences were omitted by the researcher, but these sentences did not create any difference in the content of the texts. After the changes, the modified version of text A was 470 words, and the modified version of text B was 466 words. The original and the modified versions of the two texts can be seen in Appendices A and B.

The readability of the texts was analyzed through Microsoft Word¹. The readability statistics of the original and the modified versions of the two texts can be seen in Table 3 below:

	Original version		Modified version	
Readability statistics	Text A	Text B	Text A	Text B
Passive sentences:	14%	26%	0%	5%
Flesch Reading Ease:	53.4	41.1	52.4	43.7
Flesch Kincaid Grade Level:	9.7	10.9	9.8	10.3

Table 3 - Readability results of the two texts' original and modified versions

¹ In Microsoft Word, the "Tools" menu has the feature of "Spelling and Grammar" check. When all the spelling and grammar mistakes are checked and corrected, Microsoft Word will present the readability statistics results table.

As can be seen from the table, the percentage of passive sentences in the original versions of the two texts was high. In order to make the two texts easier to read for the two levels, the passive sentences were changed into active sentences as much as possible. Thus, for text A, the percentage of passive sentences was decreased to zero, and for text B, it was decreased to 5. The change in the passive sentences also affected the Flesch Reading Ease score, which is between 0 and 100 (0-29: very confusing, 30-49: difficult, 50-59: fairly difficult, 60-69: standard, 70-79: fairly easy, 80-89: easy, and 90-100: very easy), and Flesch Kincaid Grade Level, which is between 1 to 12 (ReadabilityFormulas.com, n.d.). For text A, changing sentences from passive to active apparently also affected the average sentence lengths and average number of syllables per word, which also slightly decreased the score of the Flesch Reading Ease for that text. In addition, in spite of the efforts made by the researcher, text B is still a little more difficult than text A when the readability statistics are concerned.

Furthermore, it was thought that the vocabulary of the original versions of the two texts would be somewhat difficult for the pre-intermediate level students to understand. The vocabulary profiles of the two texts (K1 words, K2 words, Academic Word List Words and the off-list words²) were analyzed with the help of Compleat Lexical Tutor (Cobb, n.d.), and it was seen that the number of off-list words was high in the original versions of the two texts. For this reason, some changes were made in the vocabulary of the original versions of the texts, and the number of off-list words was decreased by substituting synonyms or words that were

² K1 words: the list of the 1000 most frequently used word families in English
 K2 words: the list of the 2000 most frequently used word families in English
 Academic Word List: the list of words commonly seen in academic texts
 Off-list words: words that do not appear on the above lists. (Cobb, n.d.)

close in meaning to the original ones. The vocabulary profiles of the original and the modified versions of the two texts can be seen in Tables 4 and 5 below:

	Original text A				Modified text A			
	Families	Types	Tokens	Percent	Families	Types	Tokens	Percent
K1 words (1-1000):	155	188	427	76.11%	132	158	355	75.05%
K2 words (1001-2000):	24	27	83	14.80%	23	26	77	16.28%
AWL words (academic):	19	22	28	4.99%	18	21	27	5.71%
Off-list words:	<u>?</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>4.10%</u>	<u>?</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2.96%</u>
	198+?	255	561	100%	173+?	215	473	100%
Off-list words	circulates, mystic, defense, traffic jam, therapy, massage, unblock, patients, meditation, muscles, martial, amazing, endure, brainwaves, electromagnetic, computerized, scans				mystics, therapy, massage, patient, meditation, muscles, martial, brainwaves, electromagnetic, scans			

Table 4 - Vocabulary profile of original and modified versions of text A

	Original text B				Modified text B			
	Families	Types	Tokens	Percent	Families	Types	Tokens	Percent
K1 words (1-1000):	131	158	430	74.78%	122	149	365	78.66%
K2 words (1001-2000):	20	26	67	11.65%	21	26	59	12.72%
AWL words (academic):	15	15	19	3.30%	4	4	4	0.86%
Off-list words:	<u>?</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>10.26%</u>	<u>?</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>7.76%</u>
	166+?	231	575	100%	147+?	198	464	100%
Off-list words:	victims, convicted, executed, viable, banned, conservative, penalty, treason, betraying, squad, counterfeiters, criminals, rape, routinely, burglars, deterrent, injection, humane, sentenced, verifying, inmates, opponents, innocent, halted, imprisoned, appeal, exhaust, bombing				penalty, treason, betraying, rape, executed, squad, burglars, counterfeiters, criminals, victims, executing, abolished, injection, humane, sentenced, innocent, appeal			

Table 5 - Vocabulary profile of original and modified versions of text B

It might be worth pointing out again that in spite of the researcher's best efforts, text B still has a higher percentage of off-list words and so may be a bit more difficult than text A.

The measure of reading comprehension

In relation to the techniques that are employed in testing reading comprehension, it is argued that there is no one best method to test reading comprehension and no method can totally accomplish all the purposes of testing (Alderson, 2000, pp. 203-4). Every testing technique has its own advantages, disadvantages and drawbacks (Alderson, 2000). The popularity of multiple-choice test items in testing reading comprehension is also pointed out by Alderson (2000) since they provide testers with the means to control test-takers' thought processes when responding. On the other hand, he argues that the distractors may trick deliberately, which results in a false measure. Moreover, being a good reader does not guarantee being successful in a multiple-choice test since this type of test requires a separate ability. In addition, test-takers may reach the correct answer by following false reasoning. For these reasons, a multiple-choice reading comprehension test was not used in this study. Rather than a multiple-choice reading comprehension test, the participants were required to write a summary after reading each text. In fact, there are also disadvantages with this technique, just as with the other techniques used for assessing reading comprehension. Disadvantages of summary tests may occur when students understand the text, but are unable to express their ideas while writing about it. Thus, the problem with the summaries is whether reading or writing is being tested. Alderson (2000) suggested ways to avoid this problem, such as asking the students to write a summary in their L1 or asking the

students to select the best summary among the possible summaries that are presented in multiple-choice. Since the aim of the researcher was not to test the students' ability in writing but to test their reading comprehension during the study, students were asked to write a summary of the texts in their L1. In this way, it was hoped that the students would be able to express themselves and the main ideas that they got from the texts in a better way.

Before scoring the summaries, the researcher first decided on the important ideas in each text that should be included in the summary, with the help of a pilot study that was conducted with ten teachers at UUSFL. The participants of the pilot study were asked to read the two texts and then summarize them by focusing on the key ideas that they thought important for the comprehension of the texts. The researcher read the summaries for the two texts and gathered the key ideas that all the participant teachers had written. In order to score the summaries of the students, the researcher prepared a scale that included the key ideas the teachers had focused on in their summaries. The participant teachers were asked to rate these key ideas from 1 to 4 (1= not important, 2= almost important, 3= important, 4= very important) for each text. The scale and the ratings were used to score the summaries of the students.

The scoring was done by three raters independently. The first and the second raters read and rated all the summaries of the students separately by using the scale. After the scoring, it was seen that they agreed on most of the scores. The scores that they did not agree on were analyzed by the third rater. The third rater read the summaries that the two raters did not agree on and a general conclusion was made after the third rater gave her scores. The scoring scale with the list of key ideas for

each text (both Turkish and English versions) can be seen in the Appendices C and D, and a sample summary with its translation can be seen in the Appendices E and F.

The Post-treatment Semi-structured Interviews

Following the two-week treatment, the post-treatment semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to explore the attitudes of the students towards the timing of the pre-reading activities. The researcher chose eight students randomly among all the participants (four participants from the pre-intermediate level and four from the intermediate level). The researcher asked the students if they wanted to take part in the interviews and the students voluntarily accepted. There were two male students from int-7, two females from int-8, one female and one male student from pre-int-2, and one female and a male student from pre-int-7. The ages of these students were either 19 or 20.

The interviews with these eight participant students were conducted in Turkish and they were recorded by a digital recorder. The interviews were composed of questions such as what students experienced in their classes during the experiment period for two weeks, the impact of the timing of the pre-reading activities on their reading comprehension, how they felt about the timing of the pre-reading activities, and what they did during the one-day break when they received the pre-reading activities one day before reading the texts. The Turkish and English versions of the interview questions can be seen in Appendix G.

After the interviews, transcriptions were made by the researcher. The researcher then read and re-read the transcriptions to get a general idea of the content. While reading and re-reading the interviews, some key words and phrases were emerged. As suggested by Rubin and Rubin (1995), the key words and the

phrases were given codes and then they were categorized. Finally, the interpretation of these key words and phrases was done, and some parts of the transcriptions were translated for inclusion in this thesis.

Data Collection Procedure

In both the pre-intermediate level and the intermediate levels, the same reading texts were used. During the two-week period of the experiment, two texts (text A and text B) were used for all groups. Prior to the initiation of the study, the necessary arrangements with the institution to conduct the study in reading lessons and the adaptation of the existing curriculum to the procedure of the study were completed by the researcher. The researcher also made the arrangements with the participant teachers, and gave them training sessions about how to carry out the study in their classrooms. In these training sessions, lesson notes were also given to the participant teachers about how to carry out the study. These lesson notes can be seen in Appendix H.

Furthermore, in order to ensure the equality of the proficiency levels of the participant students in English, average midterm results of the 65 students were compared by using non-parametrical statistical methods. The results can be seen on page 42.

Before the experiment started, the participant teachers had tried to make the students familiar with the procedure of the study by doing some pre-reading activities (class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching and video watching) one day before, for some of the texts in their course books. The students also wrote a summary in their L1 for some of the texts in their course books. In this way, the researcher tried to eliminate the novelty effect of doing pre-reading activities one day

before reading the texts and of writing summaries in L1. After these preparation sessions, in the first week of the experiment, treatment group A, which included pre-int-7 and int-8, was given pre-reading activities one day before reading text A, and treatment group B, which included pre-int-2 and int-7, was given pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A. In the second week, treatment group A was given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B, and treatment group B was given the pre-reading activities one day before reading text B. The study followed the procedure below in Figure 2:

Treatment Group A (pre-int-7 and int-8)		Treatment Group B (pre-int-2 and int-7)
1st Week	Pre-reading activities one day before + Reading text A Post-test	Pre-reading activities and reading text A (same day activity) Post-test
2 nd week	Pre-reading activities and reading text B (same day activity) Post-test	Pre-reading activities one day before + Reading text B Post-test

Figure 2 - The procedure of the study

During the experiment, the pre-reading activities used for each group of students were the same. Information based activities, such as class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching and video watching, were used in both levels in order to activate the background knowledge of the students and to give them some background information that demanded cognitive processing. After reading the texts, the students were asked to write a summary in their L1 about the texts, as a post-test. Their summaries were scored and data were entered into SPSS for analysis. In addition, at the end of the experiment, the self-reports of eight participant students

(randomly chosen) in the form of interviews were taken to explore their attitudes towards the timing of the pre-reading activities.

Data Analysis

For this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through the administration of post-tests and interviews. In the analysis of the quantitative data, the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 11) was used. In order to examine the effects of the timing of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension, non-parametric statistical methods were used for the analysis as the data were not normally distributed and the groups were small and of uneven sizes.

The interviews with the eight participant students provided qualitative data for the study. The key words, ideas and the phrases which emerged frequently in the transcripts were identified, coded and categorized. Then the researcher analyzed and interpreted these coded themes and key words.

Conclusion

This chapter provided information about the research questions, setting, participants, instruments, the treatment period, and the data collection procedure. In the following chapter, the data analysis procedure and the results will be discussed.

CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The first aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of pre-reading activities when they are conducted either one day before reading a text or immediately before reading a text. In addition, the study was designed to explore the attitudes of students regarding the timing of the pre-reading activities. The answers to the following questions were sought in the study:

1. How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect students' reading comprehension?
 1. a) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at pre-intermediate level?
 1. b) How does the timing of pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of students at intermediate level?
2. What are the students' attitudes regarding the timing of pre-reading activities?

The study was conducted with the participation of two teachers and 65 students. Of these 65 students, 27 were from two pre-intermediate classes, and 38 were from two intermediate classes. Since all four classes received both treatments, they acted as their own control and experimental groups. Over two weeks, the students from the four classes were provided with two reading texts, which were incorporated into the current reading syllabus. In the first week of the study, one group of students in each level was given the pre-reading activities one day before reading text A, and the other group in each level was given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A. In the second week of the study, the classes

which had received the pre-reading activities one day before were given the activities immediately before reading text B, and the other two classes were given the pre-reading activities one day before reading text B. This procedure can be seen in Figure 3 below.

Treatment Group A (pre-int-7 and int-8)		Treatment Group B (pre-int-2 and int-7)
1 st week Score 1	Pre-reading activities one day before + Reading text A Post-test	Pre-reading activities and reading text A (same day activity) Post-test
2 nd week Score 2	Pre-reading activities and reading text B (same day activity) Post-test	Pre-reading activities one day before + Reading text B Post-test

Figure 3 - The procedure of the study

Data Analysis Procedure

The data for this study were collected through post-reading tests, which were analyzed quantitatively, and through interviews. The quantitative data analysis of post-tests is presented in three sections, in the order of the research questions as stated above. For the qualitative data analysis, the transcriptions of the interviews with eight participants were analyzed in order to reveal the attitudes of the students regarding the timing of the pre-reading activities.

The Analysis of the Post-Reading Tests

In order to investigate the first research question of the study, the post-reading test scores of the students from the four classes were analyzed. In these post-tests, students were asked to summarize the two texts in Turkish. In the scoring process, a scale was used which was determined by the teachers previously and which included the key ideas in the texts according to their importance. The raters

scored the key ideas included in the summaries of the students. Thus, the scores of the students reflected both the number of and the importance of the ideas that they had included in their summaries (see Appendices E and F for a coded sample summary, both in Turkish and in English). In Table 6 below, the descriptive statistics for the two summaries of the four classes are given in detail.

Classes	Text A			Text B		
	Mdn*	M*	SD	Mdn	M	SD
Pre-int-7 (N*= 16)	11.25	11.75	4.16	11	13.09	5.14
	<i>PRA* one day before</i>			<i>PRA immediately before</i>		
Pre-int-2 (N= 11)	18.5	20.13	5.49	10	9.81	4
	<i>PRA immediately before</i>			<i>PRA one day before</i>		
Int-8 (N=17)	8	9.47	6.73	13	12.91	6.07
	<i>PRA one day before</i>			<i>PRA immediately before</i>		
Int-7 (N=21)	16.5	15.52	6.11	10.5	11.14	4.64
	<i>PRA immediately before</i>			<i>PRA one day before</i>		

Note: *PRA= pre-reading activities

*N= number of students

*Mdn= Median

*M= Mean

Table 6 - Descriptive statistics for the two scores of the four classes

Since the data are not normally distributed and the groups are small and of uneven sizes, non-parametric statistical methods were used for the analysis.

The effect of the timing of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension

Comparison between treatment groups at the same level

As seen in Table 6, the median score of pre-int-2 is higher than that of pre-int-7 on text A, for which pre-int-2 received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading. However, the median score appears to be lower than that of pre-intermediate-7 for text B, for which pre-int-2 received the pre-reading activities one day before. The pattern seen with the pre-intermediate groups seems to be repeated in the intermediate groups, with the group receiving pre-reading activities

immediately before the reading scoring higher than the group receiving pre-reading activities one day before reading the text.

In order to see if the differences are significant between the two scores of the pre- intermediate classes (pre-int-7 and pre-int-2), a Mann-Whitney U test was performed, and the results showed that the students who were given pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A ($Mdn= 18.5$) performed significantly better than the students who were given pre-reading activities one day before ($Mdn= 11.25$, $U= 19.5$, $p < .05$, $r= -.651$). However, there was no significant difference between these two groups on text B.

To see whether the difference between the two scores of the two intermediate classes (int-7 and int-8) was significant, the Mann-Whitney U test was performed again. As was seen with the pre-intermediate group, the students who were given pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A ($Mdn= 16.5$) performed significantly better than the students who were given pre-reading activities one day before ($Mdn= 8$, $U= 79.5$, $p < .05$, $r= -.471$). However, like the pre-intermediate group, there was no significant difference between these two groups for text B.

These results confirm that when students were given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A, their scores were higher than the scores of the other students who were given pre-reading activities one day before reading text A. However, this result was not seen for text B. Therefore, it appears that there might have been another variable that affected the scores of the students for text B. During the interviews, students reported that they had more difficulty in understanding text B and writing a summary of it than with text A. This is not surprising, given the fact that the readability statistics and the vocabulary profile given on pages 43 and 45

indicated that text B was, indeed, a little more difficult than text A. Thus, it can be said that the difficulty of text B may have mitigated some of the influence of the timing of the pre-reading activities for that text.

Comparison within groups under different timing conditions

When the medians of each group are examined, it appears that all the groups except pre-int-7 with a minor difference did better when they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts than when they received them one day before reading the texts. Table 7 below shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of the classes for the two treatments.

	<i>PRA one day before</i>				<i>PRA immediately before</i>			
Group	Text	Mdn	M	SD	Text	Mdn	M	SD
Pre-int-7	A	11.25	11.75	4.16	B	11	13.09	5.14
Pre-int-2	B	10	9.81	4	A	18.5	20.13	5.49
Int-8	A	8	9.47	6.73	B	13	12.91	6.07
Int-7	B	10.5	11.14	4.64	A	16.5	15.52	6.11

Table 7 - Descriptive statistics for the mean scores of the classes for the two treatments

In order to compare the performance of each class in each condition, Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were conducted. The test of the medians of pre-int-7 for both texts showed that there was no significant difference when they received the pre-reading activities one day before reading text A than when they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B. However, for pre-int-2, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test results revealed that there was a significant difference between the students' scores for text A and text B. When students received pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A (*Mdn*= 18.5), their scores were

higher than when they received pre-reading activities one day before reading text B ($Mdn= 10$, $T= 0$, $p < .05$, $r= -.627$).

For int-8, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test results showed that there was a significant difference between the two scores of the students when they received pre-reading activities one day before reading text A ($Mdn= 8$), and immediately before reading text B ($Mdn= 13$, $T= 26.5$, $p < .05$, $r= -.406$). Similarly, for int-7, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test results revealed that there was a significant difference between the two scores of the students when they received pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A ($Mdn= 16.5$), and when they received pre-reading activities one day before reading text B ($Mdn= 10.5$, $T= 28.5$, $p < .05$, $r= -.441$).

These results have shown that, for text A, when students received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the text, they performed better on the post-test than when they received the pre-reading activities one day before. However, for text B this conclusion could not be made for all the groups. Three of the four groups did better when they were given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B than when they were given the pre-reading activities one day before. The group that did not show a significant difference between the texts was a pre-intermediate group (pre-int-7) that received pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B and one day before reading text A. In contrast to the groups that received pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts and scored higher, pre-int-7 did not score higher when they received pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B. This finding supports the possibility that text B is more difficult than text A. It could be said that, for this group, the provision of pre-reading activities under a more effective timing condition for a more difficult text

(text B) enabled these students to match their performance on a relatively easier text (text A) with pre-reading activities provided under less effective timing conditions.

The effect of the timing of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when their levels are different

Comparison between groups in the same timing condition

Mann-Whitney U tests were also conducted to see if there was a difference between the two medians of the classes which received the same treatment but which were at different levels. Tables 8 and 9 below show the descriptive statistics for treatment groups A and B which were given the same treatment.

	<i>PRA one day before</i>				<i>PRA immediately before</i>			
Treatment group A	Text	Mdn	M	SD	Text	Mdn	M	SD
Pre-int-7	A	11.25	11.75	4.16	B	11	13.09	5.14
Int-8	A	8	9.47	6.73	B	13	12.91	6.07

Table 8 - Descriptive statistics for pre-int-7 and int-8

Although Table 8 shows that the performance of the pre-intermediate class appears to be better than that of the intermediate class on text A, the Mann-Whitney U test revealed no significant differences between the two groups for either text.

	<i>PRA one day before</i>				<i>PRA immediately before</i>			
Treatment group B	Text	Mdn	M	SD	Text	Mdn	M	SD
Pre-int-2	B	10	9.81	4	A	18.5	20.13	5.49
Int-7	B	10.5	11.14	4.64	A	16.5	15.52	6.11

Table 9 - Descriptive statistics for pre-int-2 and int-7

For treatment group B, the results of the Mann-Whitney U test revealed that there was no significant difference between the means of pre-int-2 and int-7 when

they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text A. There was also no significant difference when the groups received the pre-reading activities one day before reading text B.

This comparison of different levels under the same timing conditions has shown that there was no significant difference between the scores of pre-intermediate and intermediate level students. However, a difference between the pre-intermediate and the intermediate levels has emerged with the difficulty of text B. As stated before, the difficulty of text B may have affected the scores of the students in pre-int-7. In spite of the difficulty of text B, Int-8 was able to score higher on Text B under the more effective timing condition, than on Text A, with the less-effective timing condition. Pre-int-7, in contrast, was not able to take advantage of the effective timing condition for Text B. Therefore, it may be concluded that there is a difference between the two levels when the text is difficult. The effective timing of the pre-reading activities may be especially important for pre-intermediate students when dealing with difficult texts.

Analysis of Interviews

Eight participant students (two from each class) were interviewed at the end of the two-week treatment period. The students were chosen randomly by the researcher. The researcher invited the students to the interview by telling them that some questions about the study were going to be asked, and they voluntarily participated in the interviews. The background information about the participant students is given in Table 10:

	Student 1 (S1)	Student 2 (S2)	Student 3 (S3)	Student 4 (S4)	Student 5 (S5)	Student 6 (S6)	Student 7 (S7)	Student 8 (S8)
Class	Int-7	Int-7	Int-8	Int-8	Pre-Int-2	Pre-Int-2	Pre-Int-7	Pre-Int-7
Gender	Male	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male
Age	20	19	19	20	20	20	19	20

Table 10 - Background information about the participant students

The interviews were conducted in Turkish and the responses were audiotaped and transcribed. The Turkish and the English versions of a complete, sample interview can be seen in Appendices I and J, respectively. In addition, selected sections of the transcribed interviews were translated into English, for the purpose of inclusion in the thesis. The following features were explored during the interviews:

1. What the students experienced in their classes during pre-reading activities.
2. The general effect of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension.
3. The effect of timing of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension.
4. What students did during the period between the pre-reading activities and reading the text.

The analysis of data started with the reading and re-reading of the interviews in order to have the general content clearly in mind, as suggested in Rubin and Rubin (1995). The questions that were asked during the interview exploring the features stated above were examined (see Appendix G for the interview questions). Some key words and phrases that related to these features were selected. These key words and phrases were coded and then categorized and interpreted according to the order of these features.

When the eight students were asked about their experiences in their classes during the two-week period, they all mentioned the class discussion-brainstorming that they had done about the subjects that they were going to read about, the vocabulary matching activity for the unknown words in the texts, and the videos that they had watched. However, with the exception of two students (Student 3 and Student 5), none of the participants had realized the difference in the timing of the pre-reading activities at first. Since, before the study, they had experienced some variation in the timing of the pre-reading activities that they did for the texts in their course books, they may have gotten used to it, and thus, the difference in the timing of the activities did not immediately spring to their minds. After thinking for some time during the interview, they remembered that there was a difference in the timing of the pre-reading activities for the two texts.

All the participant students indicated the positive effects of the pre-reading activities on their reading comprehension of the two texts. They emphasized the importance of class discussion- brainstorming, the vocabulary matching activity, and video watching before reading the texts, and the positive effects of these activities on their understanding of the two texts. The quote below from one of the participant students shows the effectiveness of the vocabulary matching activity for reading comprehension:

S2 (Int-7): Pre-reading activities helped me in understanding the reading texts. In the texts, there were words that I did not know. The vocabulary matching activity that we did was beneficial for me because studying the English definition of a word was more effective and I remembered them easily. I learned a lot of new words.

One of the participant students focused on the effectiveness of both video watching and the vocabulary matching activity as pre-reading activities. He stated:

S6 (Pre-int-2): I think visual materials help students to understand the text easily and in a fast way. They are more permanent than the written texts. Watching a video before reading the texts, helped me a lot... When we did a vocabulary matching activity, I could remember the words easily.

In addition, one of the participant students emphasized that class discussions- brainstorming were also helpful in his understanding of the texts. He said:

S8 (Pre-int-7): If I had started reading the texts without doing pre-reading activities, I do not think that I would have comprehended the texts. The texts were a bit difficult for me. If I had not watched the video and had not discussed about the subjects in the class, understanding the texts would have been difficult. I think that the videos and the class discussions were very beneficial and effective.

As for the effect of timing of the pre-reading activities, the students were asked which of the two ways - doing the pre-reading activities one day before or immediately before reading the texts - they thought had a greater impact on their reading comprehension. Three students (Students 2, 4, and 8) stated that doing pre-reading activities one day before was more effective. They indicated that when they did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text, they could use the new information they had learned to make connections and associations with their background knowledge, they could digest what they learned, and they could have time to think and talk about what they learned. The quote below from one of the participant students showed the effectiveness of doing the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text on his reading comprehension. He focused on having time to think and making connections and associations with the background knowledge by saying:

S8 (Pre-int-7): When you do all the activities on the same day, there is nothing left to do on the other day. However, if we do the pre-reading activities one day before reading a text, then you will have time to think about the subject and the things that you learn. The new words that you have learned will be more permanent...[I think] doing pre-reading activities one

day before reading a text is better. At least we can contemplate about the subject; we can add some things to our knowledge. Reading the text after comprehending some things was better and more helpful for me.

In addition, one of the participant students emphasized the opportunity to digest the new information. She said:

S4 (Int-8): I have to digest what I have learned. This is one of my characteristics. Because of this, when we did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text, especially the vocabulary matching activity, I could easily write a summary of the text without turning back to the definitions of the words that we had done the day before. I could remember the words as I could digest them in this one-day break. When we did the vocabulary matching activity immediately before reading the text, I had difficulty in writing a summary of the text and remembering the words that we had studied.

When the post-test results of these three participant students were analyzed, it is interesting to see that only Student 8 from pre-int-7 obtained a higher result in his post-test when he received the pre-reading activities one day before. The remaining two students (Student 2 from int-7, and Student 4 from int-8) obtained higher results from their post-tests when they did the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts. Even though the two students thought that doing pre-reading activities one day before reading a text was more effective than doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text, their test results revealed just the opposite.

While three of the participant students thought that doing pre-reading activities one day before was more effective for the comprehension of the texts, four students (Students 1, 5, 6, and 7) thought that it was better to do the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts, since they believed that there would not be any disconnectedness between the pre-reading activities, reading the text, and then writing the summary of it. The following quote illustrates this point:

S5 (Pre-int-2): I think every activity (pre-, while-, and post-reading) should be done in one lesson. We discussed about the subject before reading the text, we studied the vocabulary of it and we watched a video about it...When we did these activities with a one-day break, there was a disconnectedness, but in the second condition [doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts] all the activities followed one another and they were complete. I liked it that way.

The students also stated that when they did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text, they had lost their concentration and they could not remember the words that they had studied the day before. They believed that even a one-day break could influence their reading comprehension. Considering these issues, one of the participant students stated:

S6 (Pre-int-2): I think doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading the text was better since there would not be any loss of concentration. Every activity was done in the same lesson. When I wrote the summary immediately after reading the text and doing the pre-reading activities, I could remember more. I believe that I wrote a better summary in this condition. There was no disconnectedness and I could remember every detail. When there was a one-day break, I forgot some parts of the video and lost my concentration.

The post-test results of these four students (S1, S5, S6, S7) were consistent with their thoughts. It was seen that the test scores of these four students were higher when they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts than when they received the pre-reading activities one day before reading the texts.

The remaining participant student (Student 3) emphasized that the effectiveness of the timing of the pre-reading activities depended on the subject of the reading texts. She said that if the subject attracted the attention of the students and drew their interest, then students could remember the details of the activities even if there was a one-day break. She also thought that if students had written a summary of a text by adding their personal comments rather than what they had understood, then a one-day break would have been more beneficial because she

believed that in this one-day break students could think more about the subject and discuss it with their friends more. She said that doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text would be better if a summary did not include any personal comments, as they had done in their post-tests. When the post-test results of this remaining participant student were analyzed, it was seen that she got low results from both texts. However, her post-test result when she was given the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the text was higher than her test result when she received the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text. Thus, it can be said that her test results were consistent with what she thought about the timing of the pre-reading activities, given that students were not asked to include any personal comments in their summaries.

During the interviews, the students were also asked about what they had done in the period between the pre-reading activities and reading the text, in the “one-day before” condition. Three students (S1, S3, and S5) reported that they had discussed the subject with their friends, one student (S4) said that she had discussed the subject with her family, and one student (S8) reported that he had thought about the subject during this one-day break. However, they pointed out that they had not done any extra research. Thus, it is understood that they used this time period to discuss and think about the subjects rather than searching for more information about the subjects.

From the interviews, it can be said that the eight participant students reported a large range of positive effects of the pre-reading activities on their reading comprehension. They thought that pre-reading activities, such as class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary preview, and watching a video, were important and

helpful in understanding the reading texts. Regarding the timing of the pre-reading activities, the attitudes of the eight participant students were somewhat mixed and did not clearly show whether one method was better than the other for reading comprehension in the eyes of students. However, the interviews were important in presenting the attitudes of the students and showing a match between the post-test results of the students who believed that doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text was more effective than doing pre-reading activities one day before.

Conclusion

This study explored the effect of the timing of pre-reading activities on pre-intermediate and intermediate level students' reading comprehension and the attitudes of the students regarding the timing of the pre-reading activities. The results of the post-tests revealed that when students received pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts, they had significantly higher results than when they received them one day before reading the texts. In addition, it was seen that effective timing might be more important for lower level students when a text is difficult. Furthermore, the interviews with the eight participant students provided an insight into their attitudes regarding the effectiveness of the pre-reading activities and the effect of the timing of them on their reading comprehension.

In the next chapter, the findings of the study and implications for the timing of the pre-reading activities will be discussed. Chapter 5 will also consider the limitations of the study and directions for future research.

CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION

Introduction

This study investigated the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted either one day before or immediately before reading a text, and the attitudes of the students towards the variation in the timing of the pre-reading activities.

In order to seek answers to the research questions, the required data were gathered through the students' summaries of the two texts (text A and text B) which were administered under different timing conditions to 65 participant students from two pre-intermediate and two intermediate classes at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages. In addition, eight participant students who were chosen randomly, two from each class, participated voluntarily in the interviews after the treatment.

In the following sections of this chapter, the findings, pedagogical implications, and limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, suggestions for further studies and overall conclusions are presented.

Findings and Discussion

The Effect of Timing of the Pre-reading Activities on Students'

Reading Comprehension

The quantitative data gathered from the students' summaries which were administered at the end of each procedure during the two-week treatment shed some light on the effect of the timing of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension. The post-test scores of the four groups were calculated and

compared with each other to see the effect of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they were conducted one day before reading the texts and immediately before reading the texts. This comparison indicated that when students did the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the texts, they performed better on post-tests in comparison to when they did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the texts. This finding does not support what the literature indicates about the time needed to digest the new information acquired, and to make connections with the background knowledge and the new information received. Brooks and Brooks (1999) state that more time may be needed to digest newly acquired knowledge and to construct a relationship between the information given and already formed background knowledge; given this, they suggest that teachers should provide their students time to make connections and associations with the information given. This suggestion may also be supported by the cognitive load theory, which indicates that if a reader has to make new connections between the new information and her/his background knowledge in a short time, it may create high processing demands in her/his working memory. This load in the reader's working memory may create comprehension problems. However, the results of the quantitative analysis showed that these students did not seem to need time to build a relationship between the new information and their pre-existing background knowledge. Even though the load in their working memory may have been high because there was no time for processing the new information, students scored better in their post-tests when they did all the pre-reading activities and the reading itself consecutively and without any break, in contrast to what the literature suggests about

the cognitive load theory (Chandler & Sweller, 1991; Sweller, van Merriënboer & Paas, 1998).

One of the reasons students did not seem to need this extra processing time may be that the pre-reading activities used in the study (class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching and video watching) may not have required much cognitive processing. It is possible that different types of pre-reading activities may require more cognitive processing and more time. The literature states that some pre-reading activities may require more processing time for students to build a relationship between their background knowledge and the new information they acquire (Readence, et al., 2002). Anticipation guides, as described in Chapter 2, are a kind of pre-reading activity which is designed to prepare students to focus on specific concepts by creating a mismatch between their prior knowledge and the information to be learned. By creating controversial statements about the topic that is going to be read, the teacher has the students ask themselves questions about the topic before they read the text, and this may require more processing time for students (Readence, et al., 2002). In addition, graphically represented information, which is often used for providing background knowledge, presenting new information, or presenting the unknown vocabulary of a text, as in the form of semantic maps, graphic organizers, or KWL charts, requires more processing time and provides higher level thinking activities that promote the understanding of a text (Ajideh, 2003; Readence et al., 2002; Zimmerman, 1997). Furthermore, having students write about the topic of a text before reading is another pre-reading activity that may require more processing time (Readence et al., 2002).

Another reason students did not appear to use the time to digest the information they acquired and to connect this information with their existing background knowledge could be that students may need to be given some guidance by their teachers as to what they should do in the time between the pre-reading activities and the actual reading of a text when there is a one-day break. Teachers may give their students some tasks to do in this one-day break in order for them to use the time more effectively, such as writing about what they have learned during the pre-reading activities, or asking them to search for related topics on the Internet, and activating their background knowledge, and then writing a report about what they know about the topic and what they have found. These tasks may help students to digest the information that they have received via pre-reading activities, and to construct a relationship between what they already know and what they have learned.

According to the cognitive load theory, some texts may place more information processing demands on working memory than others, especially if the topic is not familiar to readers (Chandler & Sweller, 1991; Sweller, van Merriënboer & Paas, 1998). If the reader does not have any background knowledge about the subject, the cognitive load is high (McCrudden, Schraw, Hartley & Kiewra, 2004), and thus, the reader has to make new connections with the given information and to process that information in working memory in a short time. The literature indicates that the topic of a text should be sufficiently familiar to students so that students have sufficient existing schemata to enable them to understand the text (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In this study, text A was about a special force called “Gi”, and text B was about “The history of the death penalty”. These two texts were chosen by considering their similarity to the texts that the students usually deal with in their

reading textbooks, and by trying to avoid unfamiliarity of the topics for the students. However, it is not always easy to determine in which areas students have background knowledge, as stated in the literature (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In addition, topic familiarity must also be balanced with judgments about what students will find interesting. For this reason, the topics of the two texts might have been unfamiliar to the students, and thus, they may have had difficulty in understanding the texts. Although the topic of the texts might have been unfamiliar to the students, they were given a one-day break to digest the new information they had received. Moreover, it was expected that the students would use the time in the one-day break profitably. However, it is probable that this one-day break was not used profitably by the students since they may not have done much more than talk about or think about the topics, as stated by the five participant students during the interviews. As stated before, in order for students to use this time more beneficially, it may be necessary that students be given some tasks, guidance, or instruction. In this study, students were not given any guidance as to what they should do in the time between the pre-reading activities and the reading itself, and therefore, they may not have been able to use the time in between the pre-reading activities and the reading itself to process the information given and to integrate it with their background knowledge, and their post-test results may also have been affected.

The effect of the timing of the pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when their levels are different

The findings of the quantitative analysis have revealed that there was no difference between the levels in their performance on both texts. However, a difference occurred between the levels with text B, which was more difficult than

text A. Despite the difficulty of text B, intermediate level students were able to get higher scores when they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading the text. Rather than the difficulty of text B, it appears that the timing of the pre-reading activities affected the performances of the intermediate level students when they received the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text and immediately before reading the text. However, the difficulty of text B may have affected the pre-intermediate level students' reading comprehension and their scores on post-tests, even when they received the pre-reading activities immediately before reading text B. In this respect, it can be said that when the text is difficult, the timing of pre-reading activities might be especially important for lower level students.

As no study has analyzed the effectiveness of timing of the pre-reading activities, this finding about the effective timing of the pre-reading activities when students of different levels are concerned is new in the literature. The literature only suggests that lower level students need support for reading comprehension in general, and teachers need to be careful while providing activities for them (Aebbersold & Field, 1997). This study has added to this idea by suggesting that the timing of pre-reading activities is also important for lower level students when the reading text is difficult.

Student attitudes

The second research question, which was related to student attitudes about the timing of the pre-reading activities, was addressed through the semi-structured interviews conducted with eight participant students. The interviews revealed that students thought pre-reading activities had positive effects on their reading comprehension. Students' thoughts about the effectiveness of the pre-reading

activities support the literature (Aebersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1998; Carrell & Pharis & Liberto, 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). In fact, student responses during the interview indicated that they thought the pre-reading activities that were used in the study, such as class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching and video watching, were effective for them to better comprehend the two reading texts. The studies in the literature also show the effectiveness of these types of activities on reading comprehension (Akagawa, 1992; Karakaş, 2005; Tetsuhito, 1994). In Karakaş's study (2005) the effectiveness of both previewing and brainstorming in the form of class discussion is pointed out. In Akagawa's (1992) study, the group who received visual presentations before reading the text scored better than the group who received vocabulary pre-teaching. However, a study by Tetsuhito (1994) provides information on the effectiveness of vocabulary pre-teaching and shows that students better comprehended the text when they were given vocabulary pre-teaching rather than schema activation techniques. Here, as these two studies show, it is important to point out that some vocabulary pre-teaching methods are better than others and may be more or less effective when compared to other pre-reading activities.

The students' responses regarding the effectiveness of the pre-reading activities when they were done one day before reading the text and when they were done immediately before reading the text revealed that their attitudes were mixed about the timing of the pre-reading activities. While three students thought that doing pre-reading activities one day before was better for their reading comprehension of the texts, four students thought that doing pre-reading immediately before reading a text was better for comprehension. The remaining student pointed out that the timing

of the pre-reading activities depended on the subject of the texts and added that doing pre-reading activities one day before reading a text would have been beneficial if personal comments could have been added in their summaries. Because of these mixed responses, a general conclusion cannot be made regarding the attitudes of the students. Students gave different reasons for their opinions as to which method they preferred. Three students thought that doing pre-reading activities one day before was better since the information they received with the help of pre-reading activities could be used to make connections and associations with their background knowledge in this one-day break. They said that they could also digest what they learned, and they could have time to think and talk about what they learned. The student who said that the timing of the pre-reading activities depended on the subject of the texts also thought that a one-day break could be used for thinking more about the subject of a text and for discussion with friends on that subject. In contrast, the other four participant students believed that there would be a sense of disconnection between the pre-reading activities, reading the text, and then writing a summary when they did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text. They also stated that they had lost their concentration and they could not remember the words that they had studied the day before when they did the pre-reading activities one day before. They believed that even a one-day break could negatively influence their understanding of a text.

One of the reasons that students might feel differently about these two methods could be explained by their different learning styles, which describe an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way of acquiring, processing, keeping and retrieving new information (Reid, 1995). Students learn in many ways: by seeing

and hearing; reflecting and acting; reasoning logically and intuitively; and memorizing and visualizing. For this reason, a single teaching method may not suit the needs of all learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The student self-reports during the interviews indicate that they had different preferences and perhaps different learning styles. In order to avoid mismatches between the learning styles and preferences of the students and the teaching methods, different methods should be used rather than a single method (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Thus, the self-reports of the students are also important in revealing the different reactions of students to variations in teaching method.

It is also important to point out that even though the attitudes of the students were mixed as stated above, five of the seven students' performances in the post-tests matched their preferences for the timing of the pre-reading activities. This can be taken as an indication that students' learning styles, as stated above, influence how well they react to the different methods that teachers use in reading courses. In fact, the literature states that when students' learning style preferences match with the teaching methods which are compatible with these preferences, their academic achievement is improved (Dunn, et al., 1995). Thus, using different teaching methods will not only be beneficial in revealing students' different learning styles, but also if the teaching methods and students' learning preferences correspond to each other, students may be more successful.

Pedagogical Implications

Many studies in the literature have shown the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension in both EFL and ESL contexts (Aebbersold & Field, 2003; Anderson, 1999; Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell &

Eisterhold, 2000; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Urquhart & Weir, 1998). However, no research has been done that investigates the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when timing of pre-reading activities is varied. The findings of the study are important since they provide evidence that doing certain kinds of pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text may have more positive effects on pre-intermediate and intermediate level students' reading comprehension. Yet, the self-reports of the students during the interviews were also important in showing their preferences about the timing of the pre-reading activities, by revealing that some students liked and preferred to do pre-reading activities one day before reading a text.

The study has also confirmed that students should be provided with pre-reading activities, such as class discussion- brainstorming, vocabulary matching, and video watching. One of the important tasks of teachers is to provide students with various kinds of pre-reading activities before starting to read a text. In this way, students can comprehend the reading texts better and participate in the lesson. Thus, it seems to be a good idea for the teachers to supplement the reading course book with various and different kinds of pre-reading activities that aid students in comprehending the texts.

This study also confirms the findings of previous studies in L2 reading, which have reported that pre-reading activities enhance the reading comprehension of the students (Akagawa, 1992; Carrell, et al., 1989; Chen & Graves, 1995; Hudson, 2000; Karakaş, 2005; O'Brien, 2007; Taglieber & Johnson & Yarbrough, 1988 ; Tetsuhito, 1994). However, in order for certain kinds of pre-reading activities, such as class discussion-brainstorming, vocabulary matching, and video watching, to be more

effective, they should be given immediately before reading a text, as this study revealed.

The cognitive load theory suggests that when the reader has to make new connections with the given information in a short time, it is difficult to process that information in the working memory (Chandler & Sweller, 1991; Sweller, van Merriënboer & Paas, 1998). In addition, teachers sometimes have difficulty in doing both pre-reading activities and reading activities in a single class period effectively and may believe that students need some time to comprehend the information given in the pre-reading activities. Thus, they wish to separate the pre-reading activities and the actual text reading. Yet, the results of the study showed that students in the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels performed better in their post-tests when they were given pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text without a one-day break to process the new information they receive. However, it is possible that these results apply to the specific types of the pre-reading activities and to the procedures used in this particular small scale study. Different effects may be seen when using different kinds of pre-reading activities that require more time for processing, as described previously. Furthermore, if students have been given some tasks, guidance or instructions by their teachers as to how to use the one-day break more profitably, they may process the new information they have received better when they do pre-reading activities one day before reading a text, and thus, better comprehend the reading.

In addition, teachers should also consider students' different learning styles when designing pre-reading activities. As stated during the interviews, some students preferred doing pre-reading activities one day before reading a text and this may be

taken as an indication of different learning styles of the students. For this reason, the variation in the timing of the pre-reading activities may accommodate some students' learning styles and preferences, and may improve their success in reading courses.

Limitations of the Study

Although the findings of the study have revealed that students in the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels performed better in their post-tests when they were given pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text, several features need to be considered.

First of all, the participants of the study were EFL students attending an intensive one-year language program at a university. In this respect, the findings are limited to participants with a similar profile. Second, although the number of participants involved in the study was 126, the number of students who completed all activities for both readings was 65. Thus, the number of the participants involved in the study was limited (two pre-intermediate and two intermediate classes) and the interviews were conducted with only eight participant students. More and larger participant groups would have made the results more generalizable. Third, the study investigated only two levels of language proficiency, which were relatively close to each other, which made it possible to use the same reading texts for both levels. Although the study also focused on the difference between the two levels when timing of the pre-reading activities varied, the difference between these levels was relatively small. In order to draw stronger conclusions about differences between levels, the study should have compared proficiency levels with greater differences between them. Fourth, the study was conducted over a short time period with only two different texts because of institutional restraints and time constraints. Seeing the

long-term effects of the methods used in the study, with more texts, would have been more helpful to make the results more generalizable. Fifth, it might be considered to be a limitation that the texts that were used in the study might not have been suitable for both levels. Although the vocabulary profile and the readability statistics showed that the texts were relatively similar in terms of difficulty, the study revealed that text B may have been more difficult than text A for pre-intermediate level students.

Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the findings of the present study, four important areas can be suggested for further research related to the timing of the pre-reading activities. First of all, the study was limited to 65 students from pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. It is necessary to conduct the study with a larger number of students from different levels, such as elementary, upper-intermediate and advanced levels, to further investigate any differences between levels. In addition, finding out more students' attitudes about the timing of the pre-reading activities with the help of the interviews will be of more help to have more generalizable results.

Second, because this study lasted for only two weeks due to time constraints and institutional restraints, it is essential to conduct this study over a longer period of time so that more texts can be included. With more texts, the variable of text difficulty can also be controlled. A longer follow-up study is also necessary to determine whether the students' performances are still affected in a positive way when pre-reading activities are done immediately before reading a text, and to find out the changes that may occur in their attitudes towards the timing of the pre-reading activities.

Third, since this study used three types of pre-reading activities, such as class discussion- brainstorming, vocabulary matching, and video watching, another study should be carried out in which the effect of timing on different types of pre-reading activities that may require more processing time for students is investigated. Moreover, the effectiveness of a one-day break when students are given some tasks, guidance, or instructions as to how that time should be used profitably can also be investigated in another study.

Conclusion

This study has revealed the effectiveness of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension when they are given immediately before reading a text. The study has also investigated the attitudes of the students regarding the timing of the pre-reading activities after the two-week treatment period. The results of the study showed that when pre-reading activities were done immediately before reading a text, the students performed better in their post-tests than when the pre-reading activities were done one day before reading a text. In addition, the study also revealed that effective timing of pre-reading activities might be more important for lower level students when a text is difficult. The self-reports of the students in the interviews showed that the pre-reading activities that the study used were effective for their comprehension. In addition, the interviews demonstrated that the attitudes of the students about the timing of the pre-reading activities were mixed, and indicated that students had different preferences and learning styles, by revealing their different reactions to variations in teaching methods. The results of the study and the pedagogical implications discussed in this chapter might assist teachers in scheduling their lessons and helping their students to better comprehend reading texts.

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APPENDIX A: ORIGINAL VERSIONS OF THE TWO TEXTS

Gi (Text A)

What is gi? Gi means different things to different people. Some say that it is a force created by practicing breathing exercises. Some say that it is highly developed concentration. Still others say that it is an electrical force that circulates within the body of all living creatures. Some even claim that gi is a person's soul.

Where does the idea of gi come from? Most information about gi comes from Asia and the East. For thousands of years, the people of India have believed in this type of energy, which they call prana. According to Indian mystics, or holy men, highly developed prana can allow a man to equal the physical strength of several men; letting them bend thick metal bars and lift heavy objects. The Chinese call this force chi, the Koreans gi, and the Japanese ki. Regardless of the name, the traditional thinking in Asia is that this energy can be used for health, relaxation, and self-defense.

Special gi doctors in China, Korea, and Japan believe that gi travels through our body like cars on a highway. They believe that some types of pain are caused by gi not being able to flow smoothly, similar to a traffic jam on a road. They use a special system of needle therapy called acupuncture or a type of massage, reiki, to help unblock these areas where gi cannot flow freely. Sometimes these doctors are able to direct the gi from their own bodies into the bodies of their patients.

Gi meditation, popular in China, teaches its followers to send their gi to the muscles of the heart, stomach, face and neck. These are the places where stress

builds up the most. These people believe that learning how to direct their gi to these areas will help them relax and live longer, healthier lives.

Probably the most well-known examples of gi development can be found in the area of martial arts. Exercises like hapkido, aikido, and tai chi teach people to develop their gi for self-defense. The Shaolin Monks of Central China are known for their ability to control their gi and do amazing things with their bodies. They are able to bend heavy iron bars with their bare hands, touch their tongues to red-hot swords without injury, and endure freezing cold temperatures with no discomfort.

Can science prove the existence of gi? With modern computer technology and sensitive recording equipment, maybe it can. Researchers from the University of Southern California have been performing experiments to see if there are any actual physical changes in the bodies of people who undertake gi meditation, and they have found interesting results. By attaching special computers that measure brainwaves to the heads of gi meditation students, scientists have been able to detect large increases of electromagnetic waves in their brains. Also, computerized brain scans show that people who do gi exercises use 25% more of their brain area than people who do ordinary meditation. Gi-gong practitioners are also able to direct energy to different parts of their body. This energy can be observed on special machines used to record body heat.

Is gi meditation helpful? Is gi real? Whether science says it or not, many people throughout Asia have no doubt about its existence or its healthy benefits. Maybe the only way to know for sure is to try for yourself!

The history of the death penalty (Text B)

In the United States, the death penalty is sometimes given to people who are guilty of committing very serious crimes. These crimes could include first-degree murder and treason, or betraying one's country. Capital punishment was brought to America by early settlers from Europe. In early America, people who were found guilty of murder and rape were routinely executed, either by hanging or by firing squad. Convicted burglars, thieves and even counterfeiters often received the death penalty. This was thought to be a deterrent to other criminals.

However, people began to disagree with the severity of the death penalty. Some people thought that society was to blame, blaming the criminal's environment instead of blaming the criminal. People began to feel that criminals were not evil. Instead, they were victims of poverty, poor education, and lack of opportunity. Society should help criminals rather than kill them, they thought.

Another reason for the change in thinking was economic. Prisons were very expensive. Early American states could not afford to keep many people in prison. Rather than keep them in prison, convicted criminals were executed. But as society became richer during the Industrial Revolution, prisons became more affordable for society. Because of this and other reasons, keeping criminals in prison rather than executing them became a viable option.

By the mid-1800s, many states banned the death penalty except in the case of convicted murderers. But those states were mostly the northern states. Southern states kept the death penalty for many crimes. That trend continues in modern America. Even today, most executions happen in southern states. Southern states are considered more conservative than northern states. In southern states today, death by

injection is the standard form of execution. It is considered the most humane form of the death penalty.

In the last few years in America, the debate over the death penalty has grown more widespread. A recent argument against the death penalty is that some of the people who are found guilty and sentenced to die are not actually guilty. New methods of verifying evidence, such as DNA testing, have helped free many death-row inmates. Because in many cases, criminals cannot be proven 100 percent guilty, it is not right to sentence them to death, opponents say. There is a chance that they may be innocent. In fact, the governor of Illinois recently halted all executions in his state. In Illinois, some death-row inmates were shown later to be innocent of the crime for which they were imprisoned. After that, the governor was afraid that some people being executed were wrongly convicted.

Another argument against the death penalty is the high cost of executing a prisoner. Someone sentenced to die has the right to appeal the sentence several times. The state has to defend its case each time before a higher court. One study found that it costs more than \$1,000,000 in legal costs for a prisoner to exhaust all appeals against the death penalty.

Despite the often heated national debate, the majority of Americans are still in favor of the death penalty. According to a recent study, approximately 65 percent of Americans still believe that death penalty is appropriate for crimes such as first-degree murder. In cases of mass murder, the percent in favor of capital punishment is even higher. More than 80 percent of Americans wanted the death penalty given to Timothy McVeigh, the man who killed hundreds in the Oklahoma City bombing.

APPENDIX B: MODIFIED VERSIONS OF THE TWO TEXTS

Gi (Text A)

What is gi? Gi means different things to different people. Some people say that it is a force, which they create by practicing breathing exercises. Some say that it is highly developed concentration and some believe that it is an electrical force, which flows within the body of all living creatures.

Most information about gi comes from Asia and the East. For thousands of years, Indian people have believed in this type of energy, which they call prana. According to Indian mystics, or holy men, with highly developed prana people can bend thick metal bars and carry heavy objects. The Chinese call this force chi, the Koreans gi, and the Japanese ki. The traditional thinking in Asia is that people can use this energy for their health, relaxation, and self-protection.

Special gi doctors in China, Korea, and Japan believe that gi travels through our body. If gi cannot flow freely, some types of pain occur. They use a special system of needle therapy, acupuncture, or a type of massage, reiki, to help release the areas where gi cannot flow freely. Sometimes these doctors are able to direct the gi from their bodies into the bodies of their patients.

Gi meditation is popular in China, and teaches its followers to send their gi to the muscles of the heart, stomach, face, and neck in order to relax these areas. People believe that learning how to direct their gi to these areas will help them live longer and healthier lives without stress.

We can find the well-known examples of gi development in martial arts. Exercises like hapkido, aikido, and tai chi teach people to develop their gi for self-

protection. The Shaolin Monks of Central China are known for their ability to control their gi and do astonishing things with their bodies. They can bend heavy iron bars with bare hands, touch their tongues to red-hot swords without injury, and resist freezing cold temperatures.

Science may also show the existence of gi with modern computer technology and recording equipment. Researchers have been performing experiments to see if there are any actual physical changes in the bodies of people, who do gi meditation. By attaching special computers to the heads of gi meditation students that measure brainwaves, scientists can detect large increases of electromagnetic waves in their brains. Brain scans show that people who do gi exercises use 25% more of their brain area than people who do ordinary meditation. These people can also direct energy to different areas of their body. We can observe this energy on special machines used to record body heat.

Is gi meditation helpful? Is gi real? Whether scientists believe or not, many people in Asia have no doubt about gi or its healthy benefits. Maybe the only way to know for sure is to try for yourself!

The History of Death Penalty (Text B)

In the United States, the court gives death penalty to people who are guilty of committing very serious crimes. These crimes include first-degree murder and treason, or betraying one's country. Early settlers brought capital punishment to America from Europe. In early America, people who were guilty of murder and rape were usually executed, either by hanging or by firing squad. Burglars, thieves, and even counterfeiters often received the death penalty. The government prevented the society from other criminals in this way.

However, people began to disagree with the death penalty. Some people blamed the society. They blamed criminal's environment instead of the criminal. People began to feel that criminals were not evil. Instead, they were victims of poverty, poor education, and lack of opportunity. They thought that society should help criminals, rather than kill them. Another reason for the change in thinking was economic. Prisons were very expensive. Early American states could not afford to keep many people in prison. Rather than keeping them in prison, they executed the criminals. However, as society became richer during the Industrial Revolution, prisons became more affordable for society. Because of this and other reasons, keeping criminals in prison rather than executing them became more practical.

By the mid-1800s, many states in America abolished the death penalty except in the case of some murderers. However, those states were mostly the northern states. Southern states kept the death penalty for many crimes. Even today, most executions happen in southern states and death by injection is the standard form of execution. People think that this kind of death is the most humane form.

In the last few years in America, people have discussed death penalty. A recent argument is that some of the people who are guilty and sentenced to die are not actually guilty. New ways of showing evidence, such as DNA testing, have saved many prisoners from dying. Because in many cases, the courts cannot say that criminals are 100% guilty, and it is not right to sentence them to death. There is a chance that they may be innocent.

Another argument against the death penalty is the high cost of executing a prisoner. Someone who is sentenced to die has the right to appeal the sentence several times. The state has to defend its case each time before a higher court and spend a lot of money for that.

According to a recent study, almost 65% of Americans still believe that the death penalty is suitable for crimes such as first-degree murder. In cases of mass murder, the number of people who are in favor of capital punishment is even higher. For example, more than 80% of Americans wanted death penalty for Timothy McVeigh, the man who killed hundreds of people in Oklahoma City.

APPENDIX C: SCORING SCALE FOR THE TWO TEXTS (TURKISH VERSION)

Gi (Text A)

Aşağıda “Gi” başlıklı okuma parçası hakkında yazmış olduğunuz özetlerden ortaya çıkan 25 fikir bulunmaktadır. Bu fikirlerin, Türkçe bir özet içinde ne kadar önemli olup olmadığını düşünerek, onları **önem derecelerine göre 1 ila 4 arasında** puanlandırınız. Yapacağınız puanlama öğrencilerin özetlerini değerlendirmede kullanılacaktır. (1= not important, 2= almost important, 3= important, 4= very important)

1. Gi’nin anlamı kişiden kişiye değişir. **PUAN: 2**
2. Kimileri gi’yi nefes egzersizleri ile gelen güç olarak tanımlar.
PUAN: 2
3. Kimileri konsantrasyon olarak tanımlar. **PUAN: 2**
4. Kimileri elektriksel güç olarak tanımlar. **PUAN: 2**
5. Gi sağlıklı olmak için kullanılır. **PUAN: 2**
6. Gi rahatlama amaçlı kullanılır. **PUAN: 2**
7. Gi, kendini müdafaa- savunma amaçlı kullanılır. **PUAN: 2**
8. Gi’nin kaynağı Asya ve Doğu’dur. **PUAN: 2**
9. Çinliler “chi”, Koreliler “gi” ve Japonlar “ki” der. **PUAN: 0**
10. Çin, Kore ve Japonya’daki gi doktorlarının görüşleri şunlardır.
PUAN: 1
11. Gi, vücutta hareket eder. **PUAN: 2**
12. Gi, vücutta hareket edemezse ağrılar oluşur. **PUAN: 2**

13. Masaj, reiki, akupunktur ile ağrıyan bölgeler gevşetilir ve gi'nin serbest dolaşımı sağlanır. **PUAN:2**
14. Gi ile enerji yönlendirilir. **PUAN: 2**
15. Gi, Çin'de popülerdir. **PUAN: 1**
16. Gi, kalp, karın, boyun, yüz bölgesine iyi gelir. **PUAN: 1**
17. Sağlıklı, uzun ve stresten uzak bir yaşam için faydalı ve gereklidir.
PUAN: 2
18. Savunma sporlarında/ dövüş sanatlarında nefsi müdafaa için kullanılır.
PUAN: 2
19. Aikido, hapkido, tai chi' yi bu savunma sporlarına örnek verebiliriz.
PUAN: 0
20. İnsanlar gi ile şaşırtıcı şeyler yapabilir. **PUAN: 1**
21. Gi ile ilgili bilimsel çalışmalar yapılmaktadır. **PUAN: 2**
22. Gi'yi kullananların beyin dalgaları incelendiğinde elektromanyetik dalgaların çoğaldığı görülür. **PUAN:2**
23. Gi'yi kullananlar, beyinlerinin 25% daha fazla bölümünü çalıştırır.
PUAN: 2
24. Gi'nin varlığı tartışılıyor, fakat Asya'da gi'nin varlığından kuşku duyulmuyor. **PUAN: 1**
25. En iyi yöntem deneyip görmektir. **PUAN: 2**

The history of the death penalty (Text B)

Aşağıda “The history of the death penalty” başlıklı okuma parçası hakkında yazmış olduğunuz özetlerden ortaya çıkan 21 fikir bulunmaktadır. Bu fikirlerin, Türkçe bir özet içinde ne kadar önemli olup olmadığını düşünerek, onları **önem derecelerine göre 1 ila 4 arasında** puanlandırınız. Yapacağınız puanlama öğrencilerin özetlerini değerlendirmede kullanılacaktır. (1= **not important**, 2= **almost important**, 3= **important**, 4= **very important**)

1. Günümüzde ölüm cezası Amerika’da 1. derece cinayet ve vatana ihanet suçlarına veriliyor. **PUAN: 2**
2. Amerika’ya Avrupa’dan geldi. **PUAN: 1**
3. Önceden Amerika’da cinayet, tecavüz, hırsızlık, dolandırıcılık gibi suçlara verilirdi. **PUAN: 2**
4. Suçlular ya asılarak ya da kurşuna dizilerek öldürülürlerdi. **PUAN: 1**
5. Amaç suçluları önlemektir. **PUAN: 2**
6. İnsanlar ölüm cezasına karşı çıktılar. **PUAN: 2**
7. Karşı çıkılmasını iki nedene bağlayabiliriz: toplumsal nedenler, ekonomik nedenler. **PUAN:2**
8. Suçluların fakir oluşu, eğitimsizliği ve fırsat eşitsizliği. **PUAN: 2**
9. Suçlulara yardım edilmesi gerektiği. **PUAN: 2**
10. Eskiden mahkûmların hapisanelerde kalmaları pahalıya mal oluyordu. **PUAN: 2**
11. Sanayi devrimi ile ülke zenginleşti ve mahkûmları hapisanede tutmak daha pratik olmaya başladı. **PUAN: 2**
12. Amerika’da ölüm cezası 1800’lerin ortasında yasaklandı. **PUAN: 2**

13. Kuzey eyaletler tamamen kaldırdı, güney eyaletler ölüm cezasını uygulamaya devam etti. **PUAN: 2**
14. Güney eyaletlerde, iğne ile ölümün daha insancıl olduğu düşünülüyor. **PUAN: 1**
15. Son yıllarda tartışmalar var. **PUAN: 2**
16. İnsanlar 100% suçlu olmayabilir. **PUAN: 2**
17. DNA testleri ile suçlular suçsuz bulunabilir. **PUAN: 2**
18. Masum olma ihtimali ortaya çıkabilir. **PUAN: 2**
19. İdamın masraflı oluşu da tartışılıyor. **PUAN: 1**
20. Mahkûmun, kararı temyize götürmesi için harcanan para çok fazla. **PUAN: 1**
21. Amerikalıların 65% i 1. derecede cinayet ve toplu katliam söz konusu olduğunda ölüm cezasını uygun buluyor. **PUAN: 2**

APPENDIX D: SCORING SCALE FOR THE TWO TEXTS (ENGLISH VERSION)

Gi (Text A)

There are 25 ideas below which were collected from your summaries about the text called “Gi”. Please rate these ideas from 1 to 4 according to the degree of importance and think about how important they are for a summary in Turkish. The rating that you are going to do will be used in evaluating students’ summaries. (**1= not important, 2= almost important, 3= important, 4= very important**)

1. Gi means different things to different people. **RATE: 2**
2. Some people define gi as an energy that comes with breathing exercises. **RATE: 2**
3. Some people define gi as concentration. **RATE: 2**
4. Some people define gi as electrical power. **RATE: 2**
5. Gi is used for being healthy. **RATE: 2**
6. Gi is used for relaxation. **RATE: 2**
7. Gi is used for self-defense. **RATE: 2**
8. The origin of gi is Asia and the East. **RATE: 2**
9. The Chinese called it “chi”, The Koreans called it “gi” and the Japanese called it “ki”. **RATE: 0**
10. The doctors in China, Korea and Japan have some views. **RATE: 1**
11. Gi circulates in the body. **RATE: 2**
12. If gi cannot circulate, aches will occur in the body. **RATE: 2**

13. With massage, reiki, acupuncture, the aching parts can be relaxed and gi can circulate freely. **RATE: 2**
14. With gi, energy can be transferred. **RATE: 2**
15. Gi is popular in China. **RATE: 1**
16. Gi is good for the heart, neck and face. **RATE: 1**
17. It is necessary and beneficial for a healthy and long life away from stress. **RATE: 2**
18. In martial arts, it is used for self-defense. **RATE: 2**
19. We can give aikido, hapkido and tai chi as examples for martial arts.
RATE: 0
20. People can do amazing things with gi. **RATE: 1**
21. Scientific researches can be done with gi. **RATE: 2**
22. When the brainwaves of people who use gi are analyzed, it is seen that the electromagnetic waves increase. **RATE: 2**
23. People who do gi exercises use 25% more of their brain area.
RATE: 2
24. The existence of gi is still discussed, but in Asia there is no doubt about the existence of gi. **RATE: 1**
25. The best way is to try and see. **RATE: 2**

The history of the death penalty (Text B)

There are 21 ideas below which were collected from your summaries about the text called “The history of the death penalty”. Please rate these ideas from 1 to 4 according to the degree of importance and think about how important they are for a summary in Turkish. The rating that you are going to do will be used in evaluating students’ summaries. **(1= not important, 2= almost important, 3= important, 4= very important)**

1. Today, the death penalty is given to the crimes like first-degree murders and treason. **RATE: 2**
2. The death penalty was brought to America from Europe. **RATE: 1**
3. In the past, the death penalty was given to the crimes like murder, rape, burglary, counterfeiting. **RATE: 2**
4. People who were found guilty were executed either by hanging or by firing squad. **RATE: 1**
5. The aim was to avoid other crimes. **RATE: 2**
6. People began to disagree with the death penalty. **RATE: 2**
7. There were two reasons for people’s disagreement: social reasons and economic reasons. **RATE: 2**
8. Criminals were victims of poverty, poor education and lack of opportunity. **RATE: 2**
9. People should help criminals. **RATE: 2**

10. In the past, the American government could not afford to keep many people in prison. **RATE: 2**
11. With Industrial Revolution, the country became rich and keeping criminals in prison became more practical. **RATE: 2**
12. The death penalty was banned in America by the mid-1800s.
RATE: 2
13. The death penalty was abolished completely in the northern states, but the southern states kept it. **RATE: 2**
14. In southern states, it is thought that death by injection is more humane. **RATE: 1**
15. There have been arguments in recent years. **RATE: 2**
16. People may not be 100% guilty. **RATE: 2**
17. With DNA tests, some people can be found innocent. **RATE: 2**
18. There is a possibility of being innocent. **RATE: 2**
19. People also argue about the high cost of the death penalty. **RATE: 1**
20. The cost of appeal is too much. **RATE: 1**
21. 65% of the Americans is in favor of the death penalty when first-degree murders and mass murders are considered. **RATE: 2**

APPENDIX E: A SAMPLE CODED STUDENT SUMMARY (TURKISH)

Gi (Toplam: 31 puan)

Gi her insanda deęişik anlamlara gelir (2). Doğru nefes yoluyla konsantrasyon (2) gücünü arttırmaya yarar.

Gi hakkındaki bilgilerin çoęu Asya ve Doęu'dan gelir (2). Hintli kutsal adamlar bunun aslında bir tip enerji (1) olduğuna inanır ve bu enerjiyi kullanarak kalın demirleri bükebilirler. Ayrıca bu enerjiyi daha saęlıklı olmak (2) , rahatlamak (2) ve kendini savunmak (2) gibi konularda kullanırlardı.

Çin'de bazı doktorlar bu gi denen enerjinin vücut içinde hareket ettięine (2) inanırlar. Rahat bir şekilde akamazsa bir noktada toplandığını ve orada ağrıya sebep olduğunu düşünürler (2). Bu yüzden iğnelerle, deęişik masaj yöntemleriyle, reikiyle bu enerjinin akışını devam ettirerek ağrıları tedavi ederler (2).

Çin'de çok bilinir (1). Rahatlaması için kalp kası, karın, yüz ve boyuna enerji gönderilir (1). Eğer nasıl gönderildiğini öğrenirlerse insanlar bunu daha uzun ve saęlıklı, stresten uzak bir hayat yaşamak için kullanabilirler (2).

Bu yöntemler ayrıca Uzakdoęu sporlarında da kullanılır (2). Konsantre olarak demirleri bükebilir, kızgın demirler üzerinde acıyı hiç hissetmeden yürüyebilmektedirler (1).

Modern teknoloji bu enerjinin özel makinelerle kaydedilmesini saęlar. Araştırmalar bunu uygulayan insanların vücutlarında fiziksel deęişime sebep olduğunu görmüşlerdir (2).

Ama gi gerçekten yararlı, gerçekten böyle bir enerji var mı?(1) Bilemeyiz. Ancak bunu deneyerek öğrenebiliriz (2).

APPENDIX F: A SAMPLE CODED STUDENT SUMMARY (ENGLISH)

Gi (Total score: 31 points)

Gi means different things for people (2). It helps to increase the power of concentration through breathing exercises (2).

Most of the information about gi comes from Asia and the East (2). Indian holy men believe that it is a kind of energy (1), and they can bend thick iron bars by using this energy. In addition, they use this energy to relax (2), to defend themselves (2) and to be healthier (2).

In China, some doctors believe that the energy called gi circulates in the body (2). They also believe that if gi cannot circulate freely, it will gather at one point and create aches in the body (2). For this reason, by means of needle therapy, different massage techniques, and reiki, the doctors can cure the aches in the body and make this energy flow in the body again (2).

Gi is popular in China (1). People send energy to the muscles of the heart, stomach, face and neck (1). People believe that they can use this energy to live longer and healthier lives away from stress (2).

It can also be used in martial arts (2). People can bend iron bars, walk on red-hot irons without feeling pain (1).

With modern technology, this energy can be recorded by special machines. Researches show that people who use gi meditation have physical changes in their bodies (2).

We may not know if gi is really helpful or if there is such an energy indeed (1). However, we can try and see! (2)

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TURKISH AND ENGLISH VERSIONS

1. Bu hafta ve geçen hafta okuma derslerinde farklı bir şeyler yaptınız mı?

Bunları hatırlıyor musunuz? Bana neler yaptığınızı tarif eder misiniz?

2. Yaptığınız bu okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin okuma parçasını daha iyi anlamanıza bir katkısı oldu mu?

3. Yaptığınız okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlamasıyla ilgili herhangi bir fark var hissettiniz mi?

4. Okuma öncesi aktivitelerini (sınıfça tartışma - kelime-anlam eşleştirme - video seyretme) parçayı okumadan hemen önce yapmak ile parçayı okumadan bir gün önce yapmak arasında bir fark hissettiniz mi? Bu yöntemlerden birinin diğerinden daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Bununla ilgili fikirlerinizi öğrenmek isterim.

5. Okuma öncesi aktivitelerini parçayı okumadan bir gün önce yaptığınızda, o zaman aralığını nasıl değerlendirdiniz?

English version

1. Can you describe me what you did for the last two weeks in your reading lessons?

2. Do you think that the pre-reading activities that you had completed before reading the texts helped you in understanding the texts?

3. Did you notice any difference about the timing of the pre-reading activities for the two texts?

4. We have two methods here: doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text and doing pre-reading activities one day before reading a text.

Do you think that one of these methods is better than the other one?

5. What did you do in the one-day break when you did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text?

APPENDIX H: LESSON NOTES OF THE TWO TEXTS (FOR THE TEACHER)

Text A- Gi

Same day activity for Pre-int 7 and Int- 8

Total time: 45 mins

20 mins for activating background knowledge

10 mins for reading the text and taking notes

15 mins for writing a summary in Turkish without looking at the text but the notes

Instructions for the teacher:

In today's lesson we're going to do something different. We're not going to use our textbooks today. Instead of our textbooks we're going to watch a video, read a text that I'm going to give you and then write a summary of the text. If you ask why we're going to do this kind of difference, I can say that we want to change something for the reading classes next year. The text that we're going to read will be a part of the new reading pack. I hope you will enjoy the text, because your contribution is very important. This kind of a different activity will be useful for you in the proficiency exam to help you with the more vocabulary.

Pre-reading questions

Write the bold written words and phrases on the board:

- 1) Do you think that each person has a **special energy** inside them? Why/why not?
- 2) How can **meditation** or **acupuncture** help people?
- 3) Have you ever heard the terms like "**gi**", "**prana**", "**chi**", or "**ki**"?

If you don't know anything about these terms let's watch a video and try to understand what this special energy is and how it is used (video is 3.30 minutes).

Discussion part: Students' comments about the scene that they have watched.

4) Now what do you think of this special energy?

5) What kind of things can be done with this special energy?

Healing the patients and directing energy to the patients with hands.

6) What else can be done with this kind of energy and concentration?

OK, we're going to read a text about this special energy. But before that we have a vocabulary exercise. These words are taken from the text that you are going to read. You are going to match the words with the definitions.

Vocabulary Preview: Match the words that are taken from the reading text with the given definitions.

1. living creatures: living things (d)
2. flow: to move, circulate (k)
3. mystics: people who practice religious rites (h)
4. holy: religious (a)
5. bend: to make a curve (b)
6. self-protection: defense of oneself (i)
7. martial arts: Asian arts for self-defense (g)
8. astonishing: surprising (c)
9. resist: to withstand or oppose (f)

10. brainwaves: activity of the brain shown through electrical data (l)

11. detect: to discover or determine the existence of something (e)

12. benefit: something that is advantageous or good (j)

Now we're going to read a text about this kind of force called "gi". You have 10 mins. After you read it, you're going to write a summary of the text in Turkish in 15 mins. While reading you can take notes and use these notes while writing. You have to close the text, and just look at your notes while writing the summary. I will tell you when to start writing. Here are your papers. You can use these papers to take notes and to write the summary. Do not ask me any words because we have already described the most important ones. OK, start reading.

After 10 mins---Now you can start writing a summary in Turkish about what you have understood from the text that you have read and will get help from the notes that you have taken while reading. You have 15 mins for the summary.

Text B- The History of Death Penalty

Same day activity for Pre-int 2 and Int- 7

Total time: 45 mins

20 mins for activating background knowledge

10 mins for reading the text and taking notes

15 mins for writing a summary in Turkish without looking at the text but the notes

Instruction for the teachers:

In today's lesson we're going to do something different. We're not going to use our textbooks today. Instead of our textbooks we're going to watch a video, read

a text that I'm going to give you and then write a summary of the text. If you ask why we're going to do this kind of difference, I can say that we want to change something for the reading classes next year. The text that we're going to read will be a part of the new reading pack. I hope you will enjoy the text, because your contribution is very important. This kind of a different activity will be useful for you in the proficiency exam to help you with the more vocabulary.

Pre-reading questions

Write the bold written words and phrases on the board:

- 1) What is the **death penalty**?
- 2) Is it still used in our country? If not, when was it stopped? 2002
- 3) Which crimes could bring the death penalty in the past? **First-degree murder, treason- betraying your own country, rape, counterfeiting, burglary**
- 4) How were people usually put to death in the past? **Hanging, firing squad, injection, guillotine, electrical chair etc.**

Now we're going to watch a video about death penalty. After watching it, I want to hear your comments about the death penalty. (video is 3.22 minutes)

Discussion part- Students' comments about the scene that they have watched.

- 1) What do you think about the video?

OK, we're going to read a text about the history of the death penalty, but before that we have a vocabulary exercise. These words are taken from the text that you are going to read. You are going to match the words with the definitions.

Vocabulary Preview: Match the words that are taken from the reading text with the given definitions.

1. appeal: to ask a higher court to hear a case (k)
2. humane: with kindness and sympathy, not cruel (f)
3. guilty: a person who breaks the law (l)
4. commit: to do, perform (i)
5. blame: to hold responsible, find fault with (h)
6. executed: killed by court order (b)
7. sentenced: to be punished by law (a)
8. innocent: free from guilt, not guilty (e)
9. mass murder: killing many people (d)
10. capital punishment: death penalty (c)
11. victim: a person who is subjected to oppression, hardship or mistreatment (g)
12. abolish: to put an end, stop (j)

OK, if there is no problem with the words, now you can read the text. You have 10 mins to read the text. After you read it, you're going to write a summary of the text in Turkish in 15 mins. While reading you can take notes and use these notes while writing. You have to close the text, and just look at your notes while writing the summary. I will tell you when to start writing. Here are your papers. You can use these papers to take notes and to write the summary. Do not ask me any words because we have already described the most important ones. OK, start reading.

After 10 mins---Now you can start writing a summary in Turkish about what you have understood from the text that you have read and will get help from the notes that you have taken while reading. You have 15 mins for the summary.

APPENDIX I: ONE SAMPLE CODED STUDENT INTERVIEW (TURKISH)

A: Arařtırmacı

KÖ: Katılımcı öğrenci

A: İlk önce bu çalışmada ve görüşmede yer aldığın için çok teşekkür ederim.

KÖ: Rica ederim, benim için zevk.

A: Sana bir kaç sorum olacak. Bana son iki haftadır okuma derslerinde neler yaptığınızı anlatabilir misin?

KÖ: İki tane parça okuduk. Bunlardan biri özel bir enerji olan gi ile, diğer ise idam cezasının tarihi ile ilgiliydi. İlk başta hocamız tahtaya birkaç tane kelime ve yapı yazdı ve bize bunlar hakkında neler bildiğimizi sordu. Sınıfça tartıştık, bildiklerimizi anlattık. Sonra hocamız bize kelime eşleştirme egzersizi verdi. Egzersizde, parçada geçen kelimelerle onların açıklamaları vardı. Bize tamamlamamız için süre verdi ve bitirdikten sonra sınıfça kelimelerin anlamlarını tartıştık. Daha sonra okuyacağımız konuyla ilgili video seyrettik. Videodan sonra ise hocamız bize okuma parçalarını verdi. Biz parçaları okuduk ve okurken not çıkardık. Sonra çıkardığımız notları kullanarak parçaların Türkçe özetlerini çıkarttık.

A: Peki, iki parça için de aynı şeyleri mi yaptınız?

KÖ: Evet.

A: Peki, parçayı okumaya geçmeden önce yapmış olduğunuz bu okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin parçaları anlamanda sana yardımcı olduğunu düşünüyor musun?

KÖ: Tabi ki, videoları çok beğendim. Gi ve ölüm cezası ile ilgili videoları seyredince, ne okuyacağımızı daha çok merak ettim. Kelime eşleştirme çalışması da

parçaları anlamamda çok yardımcı oldu. Parçaları çabuk anlamamı sağladı. (Okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin pozitif etkileri)

A: Yani yapmış olduğunuz bu okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin okuduğunu anlamanda etkisi oldu mu?

KÖ: Evet, evet. Pozitif etkileri oldu. (Okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin pozitif etkileri)

A: Peki, yapılan bu okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin zamanlamasıyla ilgili herhangi bir fark hissettin mi?

KÖ: Evet, tüm aktiviteleri verilen zamanda tamamladık. (Zaman farkını hissetmeme)

A: Hayır, onu demek istemedim. Okumaya başlamadan önce bir takım aktiviteler yaptığınızı söyledin. Mesela sınıfça yaptığınız tartışmayı, kelime eşleştirme çalışmasını, ve video izlemeyi gi parçası için ne zaman yaptınız? Parçayı okumaya başlamadan hemen önce mi yoksa bir gün önce mi?

KÖ: Hımm, gi parçası için tüm aktiviteleri bir ders saati içinde yaptık. İlk önce sınıfça tartıştık, sonra kelime eşleştirme ve video izleme yaptık. Daha sonra parçayı okuduk ve notlar aldık ve son olarak da özet çıkardık. Gi parçası ile ilgili yaptığımız tüm aktiviteleri arka arkaya yaptık. (Düşündükten sonar zaman farkını hatırlama)

A: Peki ölüm cezası tarihi ile ilgili parça için?

KÖ: Onda okuma öncesi aktivitelerini parçayı okumadan bir gün önce tamamladık. İki parça da çok zevkliydi, çok sevdim.

A: Şimdi burada iki tane metot var. Biri okuma öncesi aktivitelerini okumadan hemen önce yapmak, diğeri ise bir gün önce yapmak. Bu metotlardan birinin diğerinden daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyor musun?

KÖ: Ölüm cezası ile ilgili parçada, aktiviteleri bir gün önce yapmıştık. Bu yüzden aradaki zamanda arkadaşlarla konuşabilmişik konuyu. Düşünmek için zaman olmuştu yani. Ama gi parçası için zaman olmadı. Bence bir gün önce yapmak daha iyi. (Okuma öncesi aktivitelerinin bir gün önceden yapılmasının pozitif etkileri)

A: Peki, bu bir gün arada neler yaptın, arkadaşlarınla konuşmak dışında?

KÖ: Ailemle konuştum. Onlara okuma dersinde ölüm cezası ile ilgili bir video seyrettiğimizi ve kendimi çok kötü hissettiğimi anlattım. Sonra onlarla ölüm cezasının kötü yanlarını tartıştık ve ölüm cezası nasıl engellenebilir diye konuştuk. (Bir gün arada neler yapıldığı)

A: Yani, bir metodun diğerinden daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyor musun?

KÖ: Benim şöyle bir özelliğim var, öğrendiğim şeyleri özümsemeliyim. Bu yüzden de okuma öncesi aktiviteleri parçayı okumadan bir gün önce yaptığımızda, özellikle kelime eşleştirme alıştırmalarını, parçanın özetini daha kolay yazabildim. Geri dönüp, bir gün önce yaptığımız kelimelere tekrar kelimelere bakmama gerek kalmadı. Bir gün arada kelimeleri özümseyebildiğim için onları hatırlayabildim. Kelime alıştırmalarını parçayı okumadan hemen önce yapınca, özet yazarken kelimeleri hatırlamakta zorlandım. (Yeni bilgileri özümseme)

A: Peki, başka eklemek istediğin bir şey var mı?

KÖ: Hayır, ama itiraf etmeliyim, yaptığımız aktiviteler parçaları anlamamızda çok yardımcı oldu. Farklı aktiviteler yapmak çok eğlenceliydi ve bize çok faydası oldu.

A: Peki, teşekkürler.

APPENDIX J: ONE SAMPLE CODED STUDENT INTERVIEW (ENGLISH)

R: Researcher

PS: Participant Student

R: First of all, thank you very much for taking part in this study and in the interview.

PT: It is my pleasure.

R: I have some questions for you. Can you describe me what you did for the last two weeks in your reading lessons?

PS: We read two texts, one of them was about gi, a special energy, and the other one was about the history of the death penalty. First of all, our teacher wrote some words and phrases on the board and asked us what we had known about these words and phrases. We had a class discussion. Then our teacher gave us a vocabulary matching exercise in which we had to match the words taken from the texts with their definitions given. We were given some time to finish this vocabulary matching activity, and after we finished, we discussed the words and their definitions with our classmates. Then we watched a video about the subject we were going to read. After the video, our teacher gave us the texts we were going to read. We read the texts, and while reading, we took notes. Then with the help of our notes, we wrote a summary of the texts in Turkish.

R: OK, so did you do the same things for the two texts?

PS: Yes.

R: OK, Do you think that the pre-reading activities that you had completed before reading the texts helped you in understanding the texts?

PS: Of course, I liked the videos. When I watched the videos about gi and the death penalty, I was more curious about what we were going to read. Vocabulary matching activity also helped me a lot in comprehending the texts. It assisted me in understanding the texts quickly. (Positive effects of the PRAs)

R: So, do you think that the pre-reading activities had an effect on your reading comprehension?

PS: Yes, yes. They had positive effects. (Positive effects of the PRAs)

R: Well, did you notice any difference about the timing of the pre-reading activities for the two texts?

PS: Yes, all the activities were completed at a given time. (Not realizing the time difference)

R: No, I mean, you said you had done the same pre-reading activities for the two texts. For instance, when did you do the class discussion, vocabulary matching activity and video watching activity for “gi” text? Did you do them immediately before reading the text or one day before?

PS: Himm, for gi text, we completed all the activities in one lesson hour. We first had a class discussion, and then vocabulary matching activity and video watching, and then we read the text, took notes and finally wrote a summary. The activities for gi text were all done one after another. (Realization of the time difference after thinking)

R: OK, what about the second text, the history of the death penalty?

PS: For this one, we did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text. Both texts were enjoyable to read. I liked them.

R: We have two methods here: doing pre-reading activities immediately before reading a text and doing pre-reading activities one day before reading a text. Do you think that one of these methods is better than the other one?

PS: When we did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text about the death penalty, we could discuss the subject with our friends in the break. There was time to think about the subject. For gi, we did not have time to think. I think doing pre-reading activities one day before reading the text was better. *(The effectiveness of doing PRAs one-day before reading the text)*

R: OK, what did you do in that one-day break apart from talking with your friends about the subject?

PS: I talked with my family. I told them that I had watched a video about the death penalty in our reading course, and I felt bad. We discussed the bad sides of the death penalty and we shared our thoughts and ideas about how to avoid the death penalty. *(What she did in one-day break)*

R: So, do you think one method was better than the other?

PS: I have to digest what I have learned. This is one of my characteristics. Because of this, when we did the pre-reading activities one day before reading the text, especially the vocabulary matching activity, I could easily write a summary of the text without turning back to the definitions of the words that we had done the day before. I could remember the words as I could digest them in this one-day break. When we did the vocabulary matching activity immediately before reading the text, I had difficulty in writing a summary of the text and remembering the words that we had studied. *(Digesting the new information)*

R: OK, do you want to add anything else?

PS: No, but I have to admit that the activities were very helpful in understanding the texts. Using different activities were very enjoyable and helpful for us.

R: OK, thank you.