

ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT

THE ROLE OF READING SKILLS ON READING COMPREHENSION
ABILITY OF TURKISH EFL STUDENTS

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MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA, 2010

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ÖZET

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Okumak, hayatımızın bir parçasıdır. Hem zevk için, hem de bilgi almak için yapılır. Okuma becerileri ise, okuma anlamayı geliştirdiği için bireyler için önemlidir. Okuma becerilerinin tam olarak sayısı belli değildir. Araştırmacılar, okuma becerilerini kendilerine göre gruplamışlardır. Öğrencilerin okuma becerileri hakkında bilgileri yoksa başarılı okur olmaları beklenemez. Bu yüzden, kendi bölümlerindeki sınavları geçmeleri için gerekli olan anlamada başarılı olamazlar. Bu sebepten, okuma becerileri üniversitelerde öğretilmelidir. Öğrenciler, anlama sorunlarıyla başa çıkabileceklerdir. Ayrıca, aktif birer okuyucu olacaklardır. Bu durum çalışmasının amacı, okuma becerilerinin, yabancı dili İngilizce olan Türk öğrencilerinin anlama becerileri üzerindeki rolü olup olmadığını bulmaktır. 14 hafta süren bu çalışma, hem nitel hem de nicel bir çalışmadır. KSÜ hazırlık sınıfları arasından iki grup (deney ve kontrol) seçilmiştir. İki gruba, çalışmanın başlangıcında okuma becerilerinin farkında olma durumunu bulmak için ön test ve anket uygulanmıştır. Ayrıca, 10 öğrenci rastgele seçilip görüşme yapılmıştır. Çalışma sırasında, C kuru öğrencileri için Ortak Avrupa Dil Çerçevesi tarafından belirlenen dil içeriğine ve konuları çerçevesinde dersleri tasarlayarak müfredata eklenmiştir. Dersler, öğrencilerin okuma öncesi, sırası ve sonrasında okuma becerilerini kullanmalarını gerektirmiştir. Çalışmanın sonunda, aynı anket uygulanmıştır. Öğrencilere son test verilip görüşme yapılmıştır. Nitel veriler, betimsel istatistik yoluyla analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen veriler, öğrencilerin okuma becerileri kullanmayı öğretildikleri taktirde, anlama becerilerini iyileştirdiklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okuma Becerileri, Okuma Anlama

ABSTRACT**THE ROLE OF READING SKILLS ON READING COMPREHENSION
ABILITY OF TURKISH EFL STUDENTS****Ebru KAYA****Master of Arts, English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Hasan BEDİR****January 2010, 122 pages**

Reading is a part of our daily lives. It is done both for pleasure and information. Reading skills are important for the individuals since they foster comprehension in reading. There does not exist an exact number of reading skills. Researchers have grouped the reading skills in their own terms. If the students do not have the knowledge of reading skills, they cannot be expected to be successful readers. Thus, they cannot achieve comprehension required to pass their exams in their own departments. For this reason, reading skills should be taught in universities. The students will be able to cope with comprehension problems. In addition, they will become active readers. This case study aims to find out whether reading skills has a role on reading comprehension ability of Turkish EFL students. This study is both a qualitative and a quantitative study which lasted 14 weeks. Two groups were selected (experimental and control) among prep classes at KSU. Both groups were administered a pre-test and questionnaire in the beginning of the study to find out if they were aware of reading skills. In addition, 10 Students were chosen randomly and they were interviewed. During the study, reading skills were infused into the curriculum through designing the lesson plans in accordance with the language content and topics for level C students determined by Common European Language Framework. The lessons required the students to use reading skills within pre-, during and post reading. At the end of the study, the same questionnaire was administered. The students were given the post-test and they were interviewed. The quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The obtained data revealed that the students enhanced their comprehension ability provided that they were taught to use reading skills.

Keywords: Reading Skills, Reading Comprehension

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) reading is a process which has been investigated for decades. Reading is a familiar part of our everyday lives. Scholars and researchers in this field have been trying to understand the details of the process.

By the 1970s, reading research in native language had been flourishing for a couple of decades as researchers were trying to understand why some children could not read. However, research on reading in a second language almost never existed. After Kenneth Goodman's (1967) article, "Reading: A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game", experts of second language started to deal with the issues and questions on second language reading pedagogy (in Brown, 2001).

Researchers have put forward various views on the process of reading. Alyousef (2005) states that reading can be seen as an "interactive" process between a reader and a text, and this leads to fluency in reading. In this process, the reader interacts dynamically with the text while trying to elicit the meaning. The reader uses various kinds of knowledge, which can be named as linguistic, systemic and schematic knowledge.

The word *reading* is often used to describe both what beginners do when they are learning to read, and what good readers do when they are involved in fluent reading. According to Eskey (1983), the two kinds of readers do different things and therefore have very different needs as they struggle to become better readers. Reading at different levels of proficiency presupposes different levels of knowledge, and serves different needs and purposes. Hence, what may be true about reading at a particular level of proficiency may not be true for reading at much higher or much lower level. Reading is primarily a cognitive process, and the key to fluent reading is not a kind of visual gymnastics, but knowledge.

Reading is a self-discovery process. During this process, readers interact with written materials by investing both cognitive and metacognitive efforts to decompose new knowledge so as to make or infer meaning. From this point of view, reading comprehension can be seen as the final product. Nevertheless, we do not know much about how comprehension occurs. Comprehension is what reading instruction is intended to address (Casanave, 1988).

People have long been interested in the aspects of reading comprehension in the research of EFL reading. To Jones (1985), it is not enough for the reader only to decode words to find out their meanings. Moreover, reading involves an interaction between the reader, the information stated in the text, and the characteristic of the context. In this perspective, the goal of reading is to construct meaning from the text.

The definition of reading that stems from schema theory says that meaning is not contained in the text. How do readers construct meaning and make sense of what they read? How do they decide what to dwell on and infer a writer's message? These questions are the ones addressed by what is known as schema theory, the core of which is that a text does not carry a meaning by itself. Each reader brings information, knowledge, emotion, experience and culture; in other words schemata (plural); to the printed work. Brown (2001) indicates the essence of schema theory:

Research has shown that reading is only incidentally visual. More information is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page. That is, readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign it membership to an appropriate group of concepts already stored in their memories.... Skill in reading depends on the efficient interaction between linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world (pp. 299-300).

The reader knows two categories of schemata; called the content and the formal schemata. The content schemata include what we know about people, the world, culture and universe. The formal schemata consist of our knowledge about discourse and structure.

As a result of Goodman's (in Brown, 2001) work, the distinction between bottom-up and top-down processing became a cornerstone of reading methodology. In bottom-up processing, readers must first recognize various linguistic signals, such as letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, and discourse markers. Then, using the linguistic data-processing mechanism, the reader will impose some kind of order on these signals. In other words, the reader chooses the signals which make some sense.

In summary, reading comprehension is an interactive process, in which the reader constructs meaning depending on previous knowledge, characteristics of the text, and the reader's use of comprehension strategies. Readers failing to employ appropriate comprehension-fostering strategies may encounter comprehension loss. The comprehension of poor readers has been improved by instruction designed to increase the use of comprehension strategies.

1.2. Background to the Study

There are many areas in language teaching, which need to be investigated. Reading in a foreign language is one of these areas. Researchers have long investigated the aspects of EFL reading process, yet there is a need for further investigation.

There exist many theories of reading. Irwin (1991) notes that the number of theories dealing with reading is overwhelming. These theories include what reading is, how it is acquired and taught, and how reading in a foreign language differs from reading in a first language. The main advantage of theories of reading is that they help to crystallize ideas more clearly, and they may also help one to see the deficiencies in one's point of view. The main disadvantage is that they inevitably make the reading process appear simpler than it really is.

A major theory in reading is the schema theory. The schema theory is based on constructivism. This theory emphasizes the role of background knowledge (schema) in reading. In other words; we cannot comprehend what we read unless we have prior knowledge. Carrell (1983) indicates that this theory yields some important insights into comprehension. Schemata (the plural of schema) have guided the comprehension not only

by events and activities, but also the interpretation of the linguistic representations of them. Similarly, Alderson (2000) notes that the knowledge of reader affects what they understand.

In light of the statements put forward by researchers (Irwin 1991; Carrell 1983; Alderson, 2000), we need to take certain points into account when we teach to read. As suggested by Irwin (1991), reading lessons should include background knowledge in pre-, during- and after-reading tasks. Background knowledge should be recognized as an effect on comprehension, and the teacher should intend to allow background knowledge to facilitate performance. In addition, specific skills and strategies should be practiced regularly.

Traditionally, reading is a passive activity. In fact, it should be active. As Block (1992) indicates, reading is a hidden process that it is often unnoticed in the language classroom. Teachers often believe that reading classes should be teacher-centered. According to Bedir (1998), if teachers adopt rote learning, learners are usually expected to tackle comprehension difficulties by themselves.

Moreover, teachers must focus not only on language development, but also on reading strategy practice. Rivas (1999) notes that language problems seem to be the most frequent source of reading difficulties confronted by EFL learners. Thus, we must focus on reading skills as well as language problems.

What do skilled readers read for? According to Eskey (1983), skilled readers read for meaning; they do not decode like a computer. They do not actually look at all of every sentence or every phrase; let alone every word, or letter, or punctuation mark. They do not adopt memorization.

Thus, it can be stated that reading skills are related to comprehension. As stated by Bedir (1998), if the readers have sufficient knowledge of content and repertoire of reading and learning strategies, they will comprehend better. This also means that reading is related to schemata concept of the readers.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

It is a fact that reading in a foreign language is strongly linked with thinking in that language. If you want to read well in English, you must think in English as you read. If you think in another language and translate into English, you will usually have difficulty with comprehension. According to Bedir (1998), this is time-consuming and the result is usually incomplete comprehension. Understanding the words and the grammar is not enough while reading. The learner needs to make logical connections between his or her own ideas and information in reading. This requires using the information the learner already knows to reach a conclusion.

The major problem for most readers in a second language is inadequate knowledge. Unknown vocabulary provides the most obvious example of this, but there are also the problems of a more complex grammar, and cultural values. Since the second language reader is an insecure reader, the teacher must introduce, and provide practice in useful strategies for coping with texts in an unfamiliar language. Choosing the right materials becomes very important, and the teacher must choose, modify, or create appropriate materials for students with varied needs and purposes to read. Therefore, bringing students and appropriate materials together is a very large part of the teacher's job.

There are other factors which affect reading comprehension. According to Mikulecky and Jeffries (2004), reading comprehension is a problem for many students. When they read in English, they tend to attribute the comprehension difficulties to the English language. They may also feel that the problem is their own lack of ability. In fact, the problem is about their approach to a text. If the students understand how the information is presented in English texts and are aware of the cognitive processes, they will be better at comprehension.

Students frequently believe that to comprehend the text they must first comprehend every word in a text. However, comprehension depends on processing larger units of text. The teacher, must therefore make his or her students give up reading every word by introducing exercises, like timed readings. Not all English teachers follow this path, however. They should choose to teach their students to pay less attention to details. The students also have to learn to read critically, to make evaluations of a writer's arguments.

For instance, they have to learn to see the contextual clues and know how to use them efficiently.

Turkish EFL students are not exposed to training in reading skills. The students do not know how to activate their schemata. Thus, they encounter difficulties in comprehension. This results in poor marks in reading sections of their examinations. As observed by the researcher, the students complain about their marks and they do not know how to tackle texts in English. However, if reading skills, such as finding the main idea and contextual clues are emphasized in the training period, the students might be more successful in reading comprehension.

1.4. Aim and Scope of the Study

This study aims at finding out the strategies or skills that students employ to interpret what they read by means of clues, and reflect on what the text does by making such remarks. It also aims at discovering how the students look for clues in a text; understand the writer's purpose, and how their reading skills affect their comprehension. This leads the researcher to whether the students will be successful readers once they mastered the reading skills.

This study is based on constructivism and schema theory. According to these reading philosophies, reading is an active process which cannot be achieved without background knowledge. In addition, students must activate their schemata during the process of reading. If they lack the appropriate schemata, it is the teacher who is to guide them and supply the necessary schemata.

1.5. Research Questions of the Study

The following are the research questions generated for the study:

1. Are the students aware of reading skills?
2. Can the students be trained in terms of reading skills?
3. Are the students who are trained on reading skills better at reading comprehension than those who are not?

1.6. Operational Definitions

Contextual Clue: The reader needs to know what clues are and what their function is. It is a hint given by the author to help define a difficult or unusual word. The clue may appear within the same sentence as the word to which it refers, or it may be in a preceding or subsequent sentence. There are four kinds of contextual clues that are quite common: synonym, antonym, explanation, and example.

Metacognition: It is defined as “cognition about cognition” or “knowing about knowing”. It also includes when and where to use the particular strategies for learning and problem solving.

Reading Skills: They are the skills which help the reader to recognize and use important elements of written materials. Reading skills include recognizing definitions and examples, headings and subheadings, signal words, main and supporting ideas, outlining, summarizing, and evaluating a text.

Reading Comprehension: It is basically the level of understanding a text. It is the final outcome of the reading process.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides information about reading as a language skill and rationale and theoretical background of reading.

2.1. What is Reading?

There have been many definitions of the process of reading and a great amount of research has been conducted on EFL reading over the years. The word *reading* is often used to describe what both beginners do when they are learning to read and what good readers do when they engage in fluent reading. However these two kinds of readers do different things and thus have different needs as they struggle to become better readers.

What is referred to as reading is a series of activities that presuppose different levels of knowledge, and serves different needs, and purposes (Eskey, 1983). Ridgway (1994) describes reading as a form of human cognition, which is the level of generality many researchers are aiming for. Glendinning and Holmström (2004) define reading as the transaction of ideas in a text into one's own ideas. To Davidson (2006), reading is the process of being able to decode symbols and to realize how these symbols go together. In his book, Adler (1967) regards reading as the process of interpreting and understanding what presents itself to the senses in the form of words or other sensible marks.

Some researchers have defined reading in terms its relation to reading and learning. According to Istifci (2009), reading is a process which leads to success in learning a foreign language and good language learners are considered to be good readers. Irwin (1991) describes reading as a transaction between the reader and the text. The reader creates meanings that are useful in this process. According to Duffy (2009), reading is not a random process. It is a system and a set of conventions, which are used to interpret and make sense of the text. In addition, Perkins (1983) states that reading is an active process, in which the reader brings meaning to the text and the reading process. Much of this meaning comes from the reader's knowledge of the world and previous experience with language.

During the reading process, the reader can go through a lot of experiences. While the reader is looking at the print, decoding the marks on the page, deciding what they mean, and the relation between them, he/she is also thinking about what is being read, its meaning, and how it is related to the materials that were read before. In other words, the reader is dealing with more than one process. (Alderson, 2000).

Some people think that reading means the recognition of words. However, true reading requires critical thinking and an understanding of the writer's message. Reading is a process, and a process always involves change. True reading means transforming the words on a paper into meaningful thoughts that is understood and evaluated by the reader. True reading also includes understanding (Hellyer et al.2001).

As mentioned previously, there have been various definitions of reading. Reading is an important language skill in broad sense. The definitions mentioned dwell on the process of reading, the relationship between the reader and the material, interpretation of the written material and what the reader acquires afterwards.

2.2. Reading and Constructivism

Reading is an important skill which depends on constructing knowledge. From a constructivist viewpoint, as Tracey and Morrow (2006) suggest, learning occurs when individuals integrate new knowledge with existing knowledge. In this theoretical perspective, the integration of new knowledge with existing knowledge can occur only when the learner is actively involved in the learning process. In other words, constructivism is a theory of learning that emphasizes the active construction of knowledge by individuals. Şen (2000) supports this view, stating that, as claimed by constructivism, learning occurs when learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction.

As noted by Duffy and Jonassen (1992), constructivism holds that there is a real world that we experience. Meaning is imposed on the world by us, rather than existing in the world independently. Thus, meaning is seen as rooted in experience. Experience must be examined in order to understand the learning that occurs. An essential component of constructivism is that there is no ultimate, shared reality, but rather, reality that is the

outcome of constructive processes. In other words, an action is an interpretation of the current situation based on the whole history of our interactions.

According to Huitt (2009), the basic premise of constructivism is that an individual learner must actively build knowledge and skills and that information exists within these built constructs rather than in the external environment. In other words, it is the individual's processing of stimuli from the environment and the resulting cognitive structures that produce adaptive behaviour, rather than the stimuli themselves.

Bruner (in Huitt, 2009) provides the following principles of constructivist learning:

1. Instruction must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that make the student eager and able to learn (readiness).
2. Instruction must be structured so that it can be grasped by the student without difficulty (spiral organization).
3. Instruction should be designed in order to facilitate extrapolation and / or fill in the gaps (going beyond the information given).

Constructivism states that people can understand only what they have constructed by themselves. Tracey and Morrow (2006) mention that it is a theory which does not intend to demolish but to reconstruct past and present teaching and learning theories. Its main concern lies in shedding light on learner as an important agent in the learning process. Therefore, it is the learner who interacts with his or her environment and gains an understanding of its features and characteristics. The learner constructs his own conceptualizations and figures out solutions to his problems besides mastering autonomy and independence. According to constructivism, learning is the result of individual mental construction.

In sum, constructivism and reading are closely linked to each other. According to constructivism, individuals rely on their existing knowledge in order to gain new knowledge. The learner is important and he / she must be actively involved in the learning process to gain new knowledge. The learner keeps in touch with the environment and finds solutions.

Constructivists argue that all human beings construct their own version of reality. Therefore, multiple contrasting ways of knowing and describing are equally legitimate. This perspective can be described as:

an emphasis on active processes of construction [of meaning] , attention to texts as a means of gaining insights into those processes, and an interest in the nature of knowledge and its variations, including the nature of knowledge associated with membership in a particular group (Brown 2001, p.11).

In addition to presenting learning as a by-product of active mental agreement, constructivism views learning as a natural and ongoing state of mind. Learning can often take place without any external, noticeable indicators. Constructivism has been applied directly to the study of reading as an explanation of the way in which readers construct messages, or comprehend during the reading process (Tracey & Morrow, 2006).

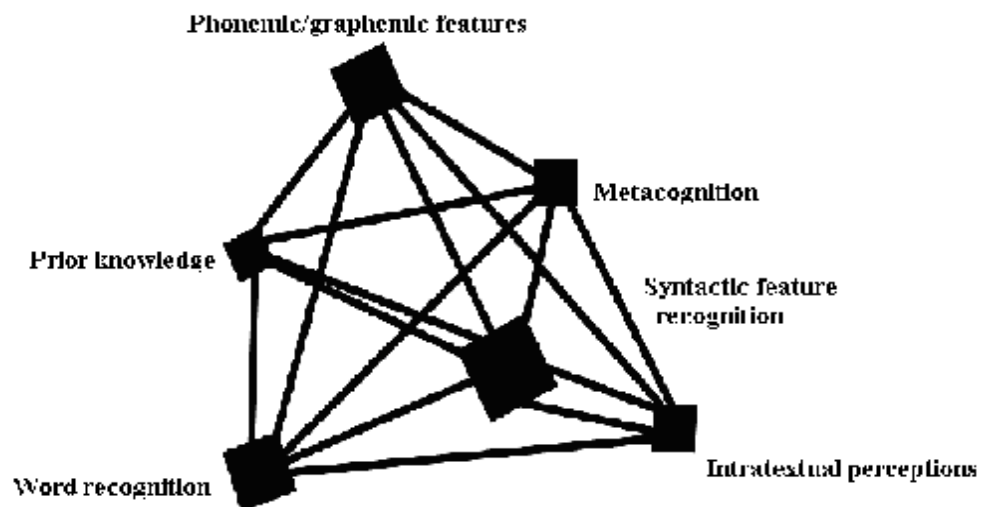


Figure 2.1. The constructivist model

Ridgway (1994, p.56).

Brown (2001) states that learning is a social process whereby students construct new concepts depending on current knowledge in constructivism. It is the student who selects information, constructs hypotheses, and makes decisions with the aim of integrating new experiences into the existing mental constructs. The cognitive structures provide meaning and organization to experiences and allow learners to transcend the boundaries of

the information given. Learner independence, which is fostered through encouraging students to discover new principles of their own accord, lies at the heart of effective education. Furthermore, curriculum should be organized in a spiral manner so that students can build upon what they have already learned.

We can conclude that constructivist and objectivist views differ from each other. There are differences in terms of teaching and learning. Below is a figure which displays the differences between them (Byrnes, 1996).

Objectivist View	Constructivist View
Knowledge exists outside of individuals and can be transferred from teachers to students.	Knowledge has personal meaning. It is created by individual students.
Students learn what they hear and what they read. If a teacher explains abstract concepts well, students will learn those concepts.	Learners construct their own knowledge by looking for meaning and order; they interpret what they hear, read, and see based on their previous learning and habits. Students who do not have appropriate backgrounds will not be able to accurately “hear” or “see” what is before them.
Learning is successful when students can repeat what was taught.	Learning is successful when students can demonstrate conceptual understanding.

Figure 2.2. Objectivist and constructivist view

(Byrnes, 1996)

Apart from these views, there are other aspects of constructivism. According to Duffy and Jonassen (1992), constructivism implies that there are too many ways to structure the world and there exist many meanings or perspectives for any event or concept. Therefore, there is not a correct meaning we are striving for. In addition, the experience in which an idea is embedded is crucial to a person’s understanding of and ability to use that idea. We must examine that experience in order to understand the learning that occurs. Most researchers agree that the experience with concepts and relations

in school differs from the experience with them in the real world. These differences constitute a major factor underlying the failure of transfer from school-based learning.

There exists a relationship between constructivism and reading comprehension. Block and Parris (2008) mention that with the constructivist viewpoint dominating research on learning and instruction, it has been realized that comprehension is not a uniform quality that one either has or does not have after reading a text or solving a problem; rather, multiple processes are involved that affect comprehension in qualitatively different ways, with important results for learning. In other words, following passive, unengaged reading results in a shallow mental representation of the text content, whereas active, interpretive reading through which a reader creates a mental model of the situation in the text is fully connected to the reader's existing knowledge.

Reading skills improve student learning in various subject areas. Lapp et al. (2004) mention that reading skills should help students build the requisite knowledge base which leads them to deeper and richer levels of understanding. That is to say, reading skills instruction must help students make explicit the implicit relationships between important ideas and concepts. This is achieved by helping students make basic connections between their own experiences and the texts they are reading. Thus, students need to build on the knowledge they already possess so they can more readily make connections among important ideas. They must also be able to recognize the content of the text and arrange the ideas in meaningful relationships. Finally, students must be able to make new connections apply what they have learned to new situations.

In brief, constructivism encourages learner independence. It is closely linked to reading comprehension, because it requires active and interpretive reading through the reader's existing knowledge. It is the reader who constructs knowledge. Thus, reading skills instruction must help students make connections between their past experiences and the texts. The instruction must also help students recognize the content of the text and utilize what they gained in new situations.

2.3. Reading and Schema Theory

Schema theory is a constructivist theory. Landry (2002) states that schema theory emerged from the studies of cognition and developed as computer scientists attempted to produce programmes which mimic human processing. Schemata are the underlying connections which allow new experiences and information to be processed with previous knowledge.

Research on EFL reading process apparently shows that what we understand of something is a function of our past experiences, our background knowledge, or our schemata. Researchers have used different labels for the concept of background knowledge. In addition to schemata, other terms commonly used are frames, scripts, event chains and expectations (Carrell, 1983).

Besides being thought of as “interacting knowledge structures” which are stored in hierarchies in long term memory, schemata have also been called the “building blocks of cognition” by Carrell, (1983). We have stored all kinds of schemata in life; for scenes, events, activities, etc. As Nuttall (1996) suggests, the assumptions we make about the world depend on what we have experienced and how our minds have organized the knowledge we have got from our experiences. The schema theory provides a useful way of thinking about this.

In general, the theory explains how knowledge is created and used by learners. According to schema theory, as stated by Tracey and Morrow (2006), people organize everything they know into schemas, or knowledge structures. An important characteristic of this theory is that every person’s schemas are individualized. A person who cooks a lot has a much more elaborated schema for cooking than someone who rarely cooks. Schema theory states that the differences in existing schemas greatly influence learning. According to this theory, the more elaborated a person’s schema for any topic, the more easily he or she will be able to learn new information in that topic area. The theory also states that it is very difficult to learn new information on a topic without existing schemas.

It is apparent that schema theory is helpful for explaining how student learn. As noted by Lapp et al. (2004), we should consider three conditions that affect learning: (1)

background knowledge must be appropriate and accurate, (2) background knowledge must be sufficient, and (3) background knowledge must be activated. If these conditions are provided, the potential is greatly increased that student will integrate prior knowledge with new information and will create new schemata or elaborate new ones they already have.

The schema theory deals with the questions such as how learners construct meaning and infer a writer's message. According to Brown (2001), this theory asserts that a text does not carry meaning by itself. The reader brings his / her own information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture; in other words, schemata; to the printed material. According to Erten and Razi (2009), schema theory deals with pre-existing knowledge structures which are stored in the mind and how readers combine their previous knowledge with the text.

To sum up, the schema theory is related to constructivism, because they both emphasize the function of background knowledge and past experiences in understanding the texts. According to schema theory, the reader brings his / her own schemata and combines them with the text to gain new knowledge. In other words, the reader must activate the background knowledge to extract meaning from what is being read.

The reader knows two categories of schemata: content and formal schemata. Brown (2001) states that content schemata include what we know about people, the world, the culture, and the universe, while formal schemata consist of our knowledge about discourse structure. Besides these two categories, Landry (2002) asserts another: abstract schemata. Abstract schemata involve hidden factors and thematic considerations. They can be found in any text and a reader's experience affects interpretation. It refers to the role of cultural membership needed to fully comprehend the meaning intended by the writer.

The schema theory leads us to other important aspects of reading: bottom-up and top-down processing. According to Brown (2001), these two processes became a cornerstone of reading methodology. In bottom-up processing, firstly readers recognize the linguistic signals (letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, discourse markers) and use their linguistic data-processing mechanisms in order to impose some kind of order on these signals. These data-driven operations apparently require sophisticated knowledge of the language itself. In other words, as Nuttall (1996) indicates,

the reader builds up a meaning from the black marks on the page: recognizing letters and words, working out sentence structure. We can consciously use it when an initial reading leaves us confused. This approach can be compared to a scientist with a magnifying glass examining the ecology of a transect.

The top-down processing is different from the bottom-up processing. In top-down or conceptually driven processing, as suggested by Nuttall (1996), we draw on our own intelligence and experience in order to understand a text. This kind of processing is used when we interpret assumptions and draw inferences. We consciously use it when we attempt to see the overall purpose of the text, or get a rough idea of the pattern of the writer's argument to make a reasoned guess at the next step. This approach can be compared to an eagle's eye view of the landscape. The main danger of the top-down approach is that the reader may try to read into the text what he / she thinks must be there, rather than what the writer intended. In order to overcome such a problem, students should learn to support their first impressions with detailed evidence from the text. That is to say, they should learn to treat interpretation as making a series of hypotheses, like scientists do.

The relationship between the schema theory and the reading process and its implications for reading instruction have also been investigated by the researchers. Tracey & Morrow (2006) assert that, in addition to having schemas for content, (e.g. people, places and things), readers have schemas for reading process (e.g. decoding, skimming, inferencing and summarizing) and for different types of text structures (e.g. narrative and expository texts). They argued that differences in readers' schemas are related to differences in comprehension. For example, a reader who has an elaborate schema for hiking will comprehend a text on a topic much differently than someone who has a very limited schema on hiking. Similarly, how well developed readers' schemas are in the areas of skills and text structures will also influence their reading comprehension. Moreover, without adequate existing schemas regarding the topic of the text, the skills needed to read the text, and the structure of the text, reading comprehension will not occur.

According to Irwin (1991), the major teaching implication of prior knowledge and schema theory is that teachers must ensure that students have the necessary background knowledge before reading. If students have insufficient background knowledge, comprehension will be poor unless the teacher and the students find a way of filling in the

gaps in their background. A useful way is lectures and activities that build background. Likewise, Erten and Razi (2009) have reported that cultural familiarity has positive effects on reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. In cases of unfamiliar cultural norms, students tend to refer to their own cultural norms and this results in poor interpretations of the texts.

In brief, the schema theory has influenced the reading process. This theory includes two processes: top-down and bottom-up. These processes are obviously important in methodology, since they offer ways of interpreting texts. They reveal how the reader's schemata affect the comprehension of texts. For this reason, teachers must make sure that the students have accurate and adequate schemata before reading. Cultural familiarity is also essential for comprehension. Otherwise, comprehension will be poor or will not occur.

2.4. The Characteristics of EFL Readers

The characteristics of EFL readers have been an important issue in EFL reading. Vernon (2009) describes EFL learners as intelligent, literate in their first language, and eager to learn. Furthermore, Istifci (2009) emphasizes that reading is a process, which facilitates success in learning a foreign language. In addition, good language learners are considered to be good readers. However, as Dhaif (1990) puts it, the majority of students in EFL situations are not fluent readers.

Many foreign language teachers have the notion that poor foreign language reading is due to a lack of good reading abilities, skills and habits in the first language. Alderson (2000) addresses this issue, and concludes that it is possible that there might be a language threshold beyond which foreign language readers have to progress before their first language reading abilities can transfer to the second language situation. He adds that since reading abilities are assumed to transfer across languages, improving foreign language reading will lead to improvement of reading in the first language.

There are a number of factors, which affect reading ability in second language. Taglieber et al. (1988) suggest that EFL students find it difficult simultaneously to remember earlier textual information, predict what is coming, and connect phrase and sentence meanings. A different view belongs to Istifci (2009), who says that reading

ability of EFL or ESL learners has been widely investigated, and it has been found that they comprehend better and make more guesses provided that they participate actively in the reading process by applying strategies.

The researchers (Taglieber et al. 1988, Istifci, 2009) put forward their own ideas about good readers. This view belongs to Block (1986): good readers adjust their strategies to the type of text that is being read and to the purpose for which they are reading. In her article, Block (1992) has also pointed out that readers are likely to differ in the standards, or cue systems, which they use to evaluate whether they have understood, and that the use of different cue systems is usually associated with reading proficiency. For instance, proficient readers tend to use meaning-based cues to evaluate whether they have understood what they read; on the other hand, poorer readers tend to use or over-rely on word-level cues to focus on the decoding part of reading and to focus on intra-sentential rather than inter-sentential consistency.

One may argue that the difficulties that might be encountered by the readers differ according to their proficiency levels. Alyousef (2005, p.70) asserts that “the major difficulty confronting the beginning reader is the development of rapid, automatic word recognition skills[...]Efficient readers use a variety of orthographic data to recognize word units, such as individual letters, letter clusters, morphemes, word stems, and word patterns”. To Istifci, (2009), an efficient reader reads to identify meaning rather than words, tries to identify meaning, considers illustrations, evaluates guesses, uses various context clues, and follows through with proposed solutions.

Among the researchers, various views have stemmed. According to Block (1992), some researchers believe that second language readers have a tendency to read more locally than native speakers and fail to recognize cohesive devices such as conjunctions and referents. Other researchers, (such as Nuttall, 1996), agree with the ones who think that it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between first and foreign language reading. They have the notion that second language readers use the same strategies as first language readers.

A great deal of research has been conducted on foreign language readers. Alderson (2000) asserts that even advanced foreign language readers do not read as easily or

quickly in the foreign language as they do in their first. This is not because they do not have an absolute deficiency in vocabulary knowledge but because they display poorer processing in lower mechanisms that might be involved in basic word recognition. On the other hand, Janzen and Stoller (1998) mention that expert readers use strategies consciously and unconsciously to enhance their understanding.

It is apparent that an important component in developing a reading ability must be increasing language proficiency for foreign language readers. Thus, one major difference between beginning and fluent foreign language readers must be their differential language proficiency. We should bear in mind that once reading ability has been acquired in the first language, it is available for use in the foreign language (Alderson, 2000).

Alderson's (2000) view leads to another question: "What are the characteristics of proficient readers?" Miller (2006) indicates that active, thoughtful, proficient readers construct meaning by using strategies. These strategies are listed below:

- Activating relevant, prior knowledge (schema) before, during and after reading text
- Creating visual and other sensory images from text during and after reading.
- Drawing inferences from text to form conclusions, make critical judgements, and create unique interpretations.
- Asking questions of themselves, the authors, and the texts they read.
- Determining the most important ideas and themes in a text.
- Synthesizing what they read.

As discussed above, readers at different levels of proficiency display different reading behaviours. They confront various problems while reading a text. As a result, they tackle with difficulties in their own way. Another point we should consider is that reading habits transfer from native language to foreign language. Therefore, we cannot expect our students to be experts provided that they cannot comprehend what they read in their first language.

2.5. An Overview on Reading Skills

There exist many factors which involve reading effectively. According to Bindaka (2007) reading is generally defined as being able to extract meaning from written texts. Like all the other skills it must be taught and developed and the ultimate goal of EFL teachers should be training their students to acquire skills in order to read and understand comfortably and hopefully make them efficient, independent and active readers.

Most researchers dealing with reading focus on the effective strategies which increase students' comprehension. As Grabe (1991) puts it, a great deal of researchers attempt to understand and explain the fluent reading process through analyzing the process into a set of component skills in reading. As a result, researchers proposed at least six general component skills and knowledge areas:

1. Automatic recognition skills
2. Vocabulary and structural knowledge
3. Formal discourse structure knowledge
4. Content / world background knowledge
5. Synthesis and evaluation skills / strategies
6. Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring

Researchers have proposed a variety of definitions of reading strategies. Pani, (2004) defines reading strategies as the mental operations that are involved when readers tackle a text effectively in order to make sense of what they read. In addition, good readers make use of strategies more frequently and more effectively than poor readers. Block (1986) states that good readers adjust their strategies to the type of text being read, and to the purpose for which they are reading.

Duffy (2009) has identified three important categories of skills as important when learning to read:

1. Vocabulary and comprehension strategies.
2. Skills and strategies for identifying (or decoding) words.
3. Skills and strategies for how to read fluently.

Research has also indicated that students can be instructed to use appropriate reading strategies to help them improve comprehension and retention. Therefore, as Pani (2004) indicates, students need to be trained to use these strategies in order to become more competent readers. According to Willis (2008), teachers can provide a variety of motivating, personally relevant, and engaging reading strategies and materials so that reading becomes a choice, not a chore. She adds that teachers need to tweak their lessons to use the strategies that fit with their students' individual learning styles.

How students learn skills has been investigated by researchers. To Paris (2005), many theories of reading claim that multiple skills are learned during childhood, at home and school. The theories regard skills as components that must be acquired and assembled. Arguments have arisen about the developmental order and importance of decoding versus comprehension skills.

It has been observed by Istifci (2009) that students learn more and find reading more enjoyable if they use reading strategies in their classes. They use a wide variety of strategies when they have to deal with unknown vocabulary, but they are often not aware of which strategies to use when they read in English. Istifci proposes the term "reading strategies" that students must use in order to comprehend reading passages, and she mentioned that an efficient reader reads to identify meaning, considers illustrations, evaluates guesses, uses various types of context clues, and follows through with proposed solutions during the process of reading.

As mentioned, reading is an important skill in EFL context. As O'Hara (2005) suggests, since reading is such a critical skill, one wants to seek ways to improve reading. The more one practices, the better. When one is reading, he / she can follow a few tips or strategies that will enhance the reading and help develop reading skills.

In brief, applying reading skills or strategies has been associated with proficiency of readers. In other words, good readers benefit from them and are more likely to comprehend the written texts better. It is the teachers' responsibility to emphasize that reading will not become a burden for students providing that they use the skills or strategies in reading classes.

It has been generally accepted that reading is essential for academic success. Duffy and Israel (2009) state that reading skills are the discrete unit of the curriculum that must be learned by students and taught by teachers. Thus, teachers must take this fact into consideration when designing reading classes.

Does an exact number of reading skills exist? Nuttall (1996) states that a great amount of research effort has tried to identify a catalogue of reading skills and establish their relationships with one another, but the issues remain controversial. Similarly, Alderson (2000) states that there is a considerable amount of controversy in the theory of reading over whether it is possible to identify and label separate reading skills. Alderson adds that reading researchers have attempted to identify reading skills by giving subjects a series of texts, and asking them questions intended to test different levels of understanding of the texts. Duffy and Israel (2009) agree with Alderson's (2000) view, noting that it is difficult to fix the precise genesis of the 'reading skill'.

In brief, there exist a lot of reading skills and it is difficult to identify and label them. Researchers of EFL reading (Alderson, 2000; Duffy & Israel 2009; Pirozzi 1995; Langan 1992) have identified and listed them with their own methods. In brief, these skills are important to teach reading effectively.

It is evident that skills are necessary for reading effectively. It is essential to know the names of skills and strategies as well as how to utilize them. But what is more important is to understand when to use a skill or strategy, why you would use it, under what circumstances to use it and for what purpose. Good readers are the ones who use skills and strategies in combination (Duffy, 2009).

Duke and Pearson (in Farstrup & Samuel, 2001) have indicated the characteristics of good readers. They claim that good readers are active, purposeful, evaluative, thoughtful, *strategic*, persistent, and productive. In addition, as Casanave (1988) notes, when they study, good readers make use of intentional techniques for remembering and understanding the material. That is to say, good readers are aware of skills and know how to apply them effectively.

It has been suggested by Carrell et al. (1989) that less competent learners can improve their skills by means of training in strategies evidenced by more successful learners. The same thing counts for reading strategies; less competent readers can improve by means of training in strategies evidenced by more successful readers. Similarly, according to Nuttall (1996), it is evident that strategy training (or skills teaching-the terms are often used interchangeably) helps. Duffy and Israel (2009) note that students need both skill and will to become strategic. In addition, as Duffy (2009) notes, we should teach skills inside larger tasks or activities.

In sum, readers must be aware of reading skills and know when, why and how to use them. Good readers are the ones who are active as well as strategic. Research conducted on skills has indicated that less competent readers can improve their skills through training. However, it is essential that the students are willing. Teachers must also know how to teach these skills.

Where do reading skills emerge from? Duffy and Israel (2009) reviewed the literature that describe reading comprehension as a construct and commonly used elementary and high school curricula of the times. They found literally hundreds of labels to name the skills, but reduced them to nine conceptual categories:

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Word meanings | 6. Text based questions with paraphrase |
| 2. Word meanings in context | 7. Draw inferences about content |
| 3. Follow passage organization | 8. Literary devices |
| 4. Main thought | 9. Author's purpose |
| 5. Answer specific text-based questions | |
-

Figure 2.3. Nine potential factors

(Duffy & Israel 2009, p.7)

These tasks or labels must lead to skilled reading provided that they are taught properly. They are noteworthy because they are all a part of current curricula and assessments. The approach to skill development has increased in intensity and scope since 1980s (Duffy & Israel, 2009).

Many different lists have been developed by the researchers. Alderson (2000) defined eight skills. These skills are:

1. Remembering word meanings
2. Drawing inferences about the meaning of a word in context
3. Finding answers to questions answered explicitly or in paraphrase
4. Putting ideas together in the content
5. Drawing inferences from the content
6. Recognizing a writer's purpose, attitude, tone and mood
7. Identifying a writer's technique
8. Following the structure of a passage.

In light of these statements, Langan (1992) asserts seven key skills of reading. The first five skills include the ability to recognize and use important elements of written material, whereas the last two skills are the techniques that will help students take effective study notes:

- recognizing definitions and examples
- recognizing enumerations
- recognizing headings and subheadings
- recognizing signal words
- recognizing main ideas in paragraphs and short selections
- knowing how to outline
- knowing how to summarize

Researchers have conducted studies in order to label skills. They have come up with many skills which were later converted into lists. These studies increased especially in 1980s. These skills have become a part of school curricula.

Below is an example for recognizing definitions and examples (Langan, 1992, p.316):

Edwin Sutherland, who popularized the differential association theory discussed earlier, noted that certain crimes are committed by affluent, “respectable” individuals in the course of their daily business activities. Sutherland referred to such offenses as white-collar crimes. More recently, the term white-collar crime has been widened to include offenses by businesses and corporations as well as by individuals. A wide variety of offenses are included in this classification, such as income tax evasion, stock manipulation, consumer fraud, bribery and extracting “kickbacks” embezzlement, and misinterpretation in advertising.

White-collar crime: offenses by businesses and corporations as well as by “respectable” business individuals. (*Definition*)

Example: Income tax evasion

Langan (1992) defines enumerations as lists of items that may actually be numbered in the text. We can signal a list of items by such words as “first of all, second, moreover, next, also, finally”, etc. Typical phrases that introduce enumerations are “There are three reasons why ...”, “The two causes of ...”, “Five characteristics of ...”, “There are several ways ...” and so on.

Another reading skill is recognizing headings and subheadings. Langan (1992) notes that headings and subheadings are important visual aids. In addition, they give the reader a quick idea of the organization of information in a text.

Signal words help the reader follow the direction of a writer’s thought. They are like signposts on the road that guide the traveller. Common signal words show emphasis, addition, comparison or contrast, illustration, and cause and effect (Langan, 1992). Likewise, Coman and Heavers (1998) say that signal words are extremely helpful tools for picking out important details. They act like flags to indicate main points in sentences or paragraphs. There are two types of signal words: full signals and half signals. Full signals are flags that are easily seen; words such as the first, the second, and the third. On the other hand, half signals are less obvious; they are words such as the next, the last, in summary, and therefore. Langan (1992) has classified the signal words as seen below:

Emphasis words: These words tell the reader that a particular idea or detail is especially important. Among these words are “important to note, most of all, a key feature, the main value, remember that, above all, the chief factor, should be noted, a major event,” etc.

Addition words: These words tell the reader that the writer’s thought is going to continue in the same direction. The writer is going to add on more points or details of the same kind. Among these words are “likewise, also, another, in addition, next, moreover, and, second, last of all,” etc.

Comparison and contrast words: These words signal that the writer is pointing out a similarity between two subjects. For example, “like, likewise, just as, alike, similarly, equally”, etc. Contrast words signal a change in the direction of the writer’s thought. The writer emphasizes a difference between two subjects or statements. For example, “but, yet, however, in contrast, conversely,” etc.

Illustration words: These words tell the reader that an example or illustration will be given to make an idea clear. Among these words are “for example, to illustrate, once, such as, for instance,” etc.

Cause and effect words: These words signal that the writer is going to describe results or effects. For example, “because, therefore, so that, reason, effect, since, consequently, as a result,” etc.

In addition to signal words, readers must pay attention to other clues to deal with unknown vocabulary. As Alderson (2000) notes, if the students struggle with reading because of unknown words, this will apparently affect comprehension and take the pleasure out of reading. Alderson adds that readers must know 95% of the words in text to comprehend it sufficiently and to be able to guess unknown words from context. This emphasizes the importance of lexical knowledge.

Pirozzi (1995) shows four ways of finding the meanings of unknown words: using the context, using word parts, using a glossary and using the dictionary. Akūnal (1988) notes that teaching reading is an essential ingredient of EFL reading and it cannot be taught without the help of contextual clues. She mentions that using contextual clues in

order to guess the meanings of unknown words while reading is a universal strategy. Native speakers of all languages make use of these clues when they read or listen. Therefore, teachers should raise the students' awareness about language clues. Students should realize that dictionary definitions of new words are not always necessary.

There are various tactics that can be employed by the students when they encounter unknown words while reading. O'Hara (2005) notes a tactic when the reader comes across an unknown word: to guess its meaning depending on the sentence. Even if the reader does not know the word, he / she can figure out its meaning by checking how it is used in the sentence. Davidson (2006) defines context clues stating that the clues needed for understanding both new words and the meaning of the reading can often be found in the reading itself. She adds that context clues are hints to the meaning. Listed below are the types of context clues:

CONTEXT CLUES

Context Clues to Understanding New Vocabulary

- *Definition or Information Clues
- *Synonym Clues
- *Antonym Clues
- *Example Clues
- *Clues from Your Background Knowledge

Other Context Clues

- *Grammar Clues
 - *Punctuation Clues
-

Figure 2.4. Context clues

(Davidson 2006, p. 82)

Paragraphs consist of sentences that serve as main ideas, major details, and minor details. According to Pirozzi (1995), the main idea is very important, because it is the summary statement that discloses the theme of most of the remaining sentences in a paragraph. It provides the general overall message of a paragraph. On the other hand, details are much more specific; they give additional information or support for the main idea. Langan (1992) emphasizes that almost every effective communication of ideas is

made up of two basic parts: (1) a point is made, and (2) evidence is provided to support that point. Here is an example:

Point: My neighbours are inconsiderate.

Support: 1. They allow their children to play on my lawn.

2. They often have their stereo on loud late at night. (Langan, 1992, p.353)

In order to find the main idea, firstly the topic of the paragraph must be found. Pirozzi (1995) states that the topic, which is not a sentence, can be stated in a word or a phrase that can serve as a title. The topic is the subject matter of the sentences in a paragraph. The main idea can be found in the first sentence, last sentence, between the first and the last sentence, as two sentences, can cover more than one paragraph or unstated.

Similarly, O'Hara (2005) mentions that writers usually centre each paragraph they write around one main idea. The placement of the main idea can vary. Block and Parris (2008) note that finding the main idea is primarily a matter of using cues provided by the writer in the text to predict what is most important, with the reader modifying that idea as subsequent monitoring reveals new text cues requiring new predictions about what is most important.

In addition, Davidson (2006) proposes strategies for finding the main idea:

1. Beware of the transition clues as you read.
2. Use these clues in order to identify the supporting details.
3. Think about what all the supporting details have in common (your main idea).
4. Note if you see a sentence that states this main idea. If there is not a stated main idea, you must indicate the implied main idea yourself.
5. In order to double-check that you have found the main idea, make sure that the supporting details support that statement.

Outlining is a note-taking technique. Coman and Heavers (1998) note that outlining is the most widely used method of taking notes. Outlining provides the students with a well-organized set of notes to study from, because it forces the students to figure

out the main idea and to recognize supporting details, eliminating unnecessary information. Once mastered, outlining can be a valuable tool in order to be a better reader.

There is a link between outlining and reading comprehension. According to Langan (1992), outlining is an organizational skill that will improve the reading comprehension. It will also provide additional benefits. It develops students' ability to think in a clear and logical manner. The purpose of an outline is both to summarize material and to show the relationships between different parts of the material. Outlines have specific structures. In addition, every outline should have a title that summarizes the information in the outline.

Similarly, Pirozzi (1995) notes that outlining is the only way of organizing the information in a paragraph or passage. Although outlining shows clearly the relationship between main ideas, major details and minor details, one may prefer using diagrams to organize the material. Outlining generally involves complete sentences or longer phrases, but diagramming uses key words or phrases. Below is an example of an outline:

I. Main idea or topic sentence

A. Major points providing information about the topic

1. Sub points describing the major points

a. Supporting details for the sub points (Coman & Heavers, 1998).

Diagramming (mapping) is another technique of creating outlines. As Langan (1992) notes, in diagramming, the reader creates a visual outline of shapes as well as words. Circles or boxes that enclose major ideas and supporting details are used. The shapes are connected with lines to show the connections between ideas. In the balloon diagram, the main idea is written in the large circle that anchors the whole outline. Each supporting idea occupies one of the balloons attached to the main idea. In the box diagram, the main idea is written in the long box at the top. Below the long box are smaller boxes that contain the supporting ideas. Pirozzi (1995) mentions that outlining generally involves complete sentences or longer phrases, but diagramming uses key words or phrases.

Summarizing is another reading skill. Langan (1992) defines a summary as a reduction of a large quantity of information to the most important points. It is helpful because it requires that the reader thoroughly understands the material being read. Summarizing a material will help the reader build comprehension power. The length of a summary depends on the purpose. Duffy (2009) explains summarizing as the construction of a brief retelling of a text. It can include the main idea or a theme, but the focus is on telling briefly the major points of the text.

A skilled reader is also expected to recognize the type or genre of a text. According to Alderson (2000), certain topics are associated with certain types of text. For instance, description of how a machine works is more likely to be found in expository texts than in narrative texts. The way a text is written; its style or the features make it different from the other. Thus, there are a number of different classifications of text type. Among these types are expository, narrative, descriptive texts.

To sum up, researchers have explained the reading skills and exemplified them. They have shown ways and strategies to make use of these skills. They have also shown ways of dealing with unknown vocabulary while reading texts. These hints can certainly be helpful in teaching vocabulary. The reading skills are of vital importance because they help the readers comprehend texts well.

There are also micro skills for reading. Alderson (2000) has designed the taxonomy of micro skills:

- recognizing the script of a language
- deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items
- understanding explicitly stated information
- understanding information when not explicitly stated
- understanding conceptual meaning
- understanding the communicative value of sentences
- understanding relations within the sentence
- understanding relations between parts of text through lexical cohesion devices

- understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices
 - interpreting text by going outside it
 - recognizing indicators in discourse
 - identifying the main point or important information in discourse
 - distinguishing the main idea from supporting details
 - extracting salient details to summarize (the text, an idea)
 - extracting relevant points from a text selectively
 - using basic reference skills
 - skimming
 - scanning to locate specifically required information
 - transcoding information to diagrammatic display
- (pp.10-11)

This taxonomy above displays the micro skills which have influenced the syllabus and material design in EFL contexts. Alderson (2000) notes that such lists or taxonomies are seductive because they offer a clearly theoretically justified means of devising test tasks or items, and of isolating reading skills to be tested. Thus, there emerges the possibility of diagnosing a reader's problems and identifying solutions.

In brief, there exist micro skills for reading as well as skills for reading. These micro skills are similar to skills; however, they offer more variety in detail. They also include discourse and types of reading such as skimming and scanning.

The following figure displays both the framework for reading skill / strategy instruction and the specific skills and strategies. This is certainly not an exhaustive list; it is intended to offer a range of suggestions for skill development, and the strategies for developing these skills. As can be seen in Figure 2.5, the skills are identified within the stages of a reading class.

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
● Activate Schemata/Prior Knowledge ● Connect to Experiences ● Preview the Text ○ Title ○ Cover Art ○ Preview Format ○ Style of Writing ○ Chapter Titles ○ Images ● Make Predictions ● Set Reading Goals (Focus for Skill Development) ● Establish a Purpose ● Journal Writing	● Question the Text ● Summarize Information ● Check Predictions, Revise Predictions and Make New Predictions ● Clarify Concepts and Vocabulary ● Determine Importance ● Visualize ● Make Connections to ○ Other Texts ○ Themes ○ Self ● Reader Response ○ Efferent ○ Aesthetic ● Check Understanding (Metacognition) ● Vocabulary Acquisition ● Outline / Take Notes ● Annotate: ○ Characters ○ Vocabulary ○ Important Information ○ Questions/Confusion ● Evaluate the Quality and Value of Texts ● Attend to Character Setting, and Plot in Narrative Texts ● Read Selectively	● Writing to Learn ○ Summarize ○ C, E, W, Analysis-Critical Response ○ Thematic Connections ○ Connections with Other Texts ○ Personal Connections ○ Emulate Narrative Style ● Re-Read ● Question Generation ● Use Graphic Organizers to Visually Represent Understanding ● Discussion: ○ Express and Support Opinions ○ Question the Author

Figure 2.5. Reading skills framework

Duke and Pearson (in Farstrup & Samuel, 2001, p.206)

2.5.1. Reading Skills or Strategies?

What is a skill and what is a strategy? Duffy (2009) notes that a skill is something which is done automatically, without thinking about it. It is done the same way every time. Tying shoe laces is an example of a skill. An example of a reading skill is instantly recognizing and saying a word such as *the*. It is done automatically, without thinking about it. On the contrary, a strategy is a plan. In reading, making predictions is a strategy, because readers are thoughtful in using text clues and prior knowledge to make an initial prediction.

Researchers have identified skills and strategies in various ways. According to Nuttall (1996), skills refer to automatic information-processing techniques, whether at recognizing grapheme-morpheme correspondence or summarizing a story level. Skills are applied to a text unconsciously for the following reasons: including expertise, repeated practice, compliance with directions, and naive use. On the contrary, strategies are actions that are chosen intentionally to achieve particular goals. An emerging skill can become a strategy when used intentionally. Likewise, a strategy can become a skill. In fact, strategies are more efficient and developmentally advanced when they are generated and applied automatically as skills. Therefore, strategies can be called “skills under consideration”.

In sum, reading skills are crucial to learning to read effectively. These skills help the students comprehend written texts better. Some researchers prefer using the term “strategy” while others prefer using “skill”. A skill can become a strategy and a strategy can become a skill. These two terms substitute each other in various cases. That is to say, they can be used interchangeably.

2.6. Reading Skills and Reading Comprehension

Reading is an activity carried out for certain purposes. The final outcome is reading comprehension. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), reading for comprehension is the primary purpose for reading. Block and Parris (2008) claim that comprehension was discovered as a missing link in the achievement of reading competency in educational research in the 1980s and 1990s and gradually it has made its way into instructional practice. According to Irwin (1991), a current development in comprehension pedagogy is

the direct, explicit teaching of reading strategies. If comprehension involves the active selection and use of strategies, students must be told what these strategies are and when to use them.

Various definitions of reading comprehension exist. Amer (1992) explains reading comprehension as an interactive process between the reader and the text. During this process, the reader interacts with the text and relates ideas from the text to prior experiences in order to construct meaning. Thus, it is essential that the reader understands how the writer has organized his ideas (or the text structure). Duffy (2009) defines comprehension as the essence of reading. He states that the goal of written language is communication of messages. Unless we understand the message, we are not actually reading. Block et al. (2002) define reading comprehension as the process of extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Irwin (1991) describes comprehension as the process of using one's own prior experiences and the writer's cues in order to construct a set of meanings that are beneficial to the reader.

According to many writers, 'inference' is central to reading comprehension. They claim that a text can never be totally explicit. Many things that a reader needs to know in order to comprehend the text are not explicitly stated. As a result, the reader must be able to make inferences and fill in 'gaps' (Chikalanga, 1992).

When it comes to reading, some students have misleading ideas. As Langan (1992) puts it, one misleading idea that some students have about reading is that comprehension is bound to happen all at once. They believe that a single reading of a textbook selection should result in a satisfactory understanding. Nevertheless, what those students fail to realize is that good comprehension is usually a process. Comprehension is achieved gradually, as you move from a general feeling about what something means to a deeper level of understanding.

There are certain aspects of comprehension that should be known by the teachers. According to Duffy (2009), comprehension is strategic. In other words, if we have prior knowledge about a topic in a text, we can use strategies in order to construct meaning based on our experience. In addition, comprehension is a continuous process of using text clues to access relevant categories of prior knowledge.

It can be concluded that strategies are a crucial part of comprehension. Duffy (2009, p.19) indicates a few strategies used by readers in various combinations. These include:

- Making predictions
- Monitoring and questioning what is happening
- Adjusting predictions as you go
- Creating images in the mind
- Removing blockages to meaning
- Reflecting on the essence or the significance or the importance of what has been read.

These strategies can be categorized as:

- Before you begin reading
- As you begin reading
- During reading
- After reading.

To sum up, comprehension can be defined in many ways. Basically, it is the process of making meaning of the text through interaction and dependence on prior experiences. The achievement of comprehension occurs gradually. The text clues must be dealt with efficiently to reach prior knowledge. In addition, comprehension is a strategic process which includes prediction, monitoring and questioning. These strategies can be used before, during and after reading.

What is the reason of comprehension failures? In general, students think that lack of second language proficiency (vocabulary and grammar) is the biggest obstacle to second language reading and, for this reason, have a sense of insecurity about their reading. In a study conducted by Auerbach and Paxton (1997), the students who were unable to name any strategies at all had the greatest difficulty with comprehension and those who had strategies like reading every single word or reading slowly and carefully also had

difficulty. However, the students who had prior knowledge and used skills such as getting the main idea had better comprehension. They also figured out that the students who had prior knowledge and used strategies like “ask self questions”, “read the title and think about it; ask self questions, get the main idea” and “skip words I don’t know, try to get the point” had better comprehension.

Davidson (2006) supports this view, stating that self-questioning before reading should tell the reader how easy or difficult the reading will be. It will also give the reader a foundation on which to build comprehension. Similarly, Shih (1992) says that skilled readers comprehend texts by constructing meaning actively. They integrate information from the text with relevant information from the background knowledge. On the other hand, Akunal (1988) mentions that typical comprehension questions do not contribute to developing reading skills.

Additionally, Allen (1999) suggests that students need a rich body of word knowledge in order to succeed in basic skill areas. As Willis (2008) puts it, skilled readers comprehend more successfully than non-skilled readers because they use strategies such as activating background knowledge to comprehend texts and to draw valid inferences about what they have read. They also differ from unskilled readers in their ability to decode fluently and accurately. Likewise, Block (1986) notes that good readers are more able to monitor their comprehension than poor readers are, and they are more aware of the strategies they use than are poor readers. In addition, they use strategies more flexibly.

Likewise, Bedir (2000) notes that what constitutes the difference between good and poor readers is the knowledge of strategies. Thus, good readers know how to approach a text and make a plan of reading thinking about the appropriate strategies. Readers who lack the knowledge of the strategies or are unaware of them are more likely to be unsuccessful in comprehension. According to Akunal (1988), the assumption that a skilled reader is the one who can remember the slightest detail of reading texts has lost its general support among researchers.

Students and teachers need to be aware of certain points for good comprehension. Richards and Renandya (2002) note that raising students’ awareness of main ideas in a text and exploring the organization of a text are essential for good comprehension. As a result,

using graphic representations to highlight text organization and to indicate the order of the content information is an important resource for comprehension instruction. In addition, teachers who model reading skills overtly facilitate student performances of these abilities in comprehending texts, and provide students with opportunities for practice. Similarly, Janzen and Stoller (1998) mention that reading strategies can be taught to students, and when taught, strategies help improve student performance on comprehension tests. However, it is estimated that it takes several years for EFL students to develop as strategic readers.

In sum, there is a close relationship between using reading skills/strategies and comprehension. The research conducted on this issue has indicated that the students with background knowledge and skills achieved better comprehension. Self-questioning also leads to better comprehension. In other words, skilled readers comprehend better than non-skilled readers due to their ability to decode and monitor. They are also more aware of the strategies than non-skilled readers.

2.7. The Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Reading is a skill that cannot be dealt with in isolation. As Rivas (1999) indicates, it has been shown by research that syntactic and vocabulary knowledge is essential for comprehension. Since lexis has been identified as a source of difficulty for EFL readers, the need to develop students' vocabulary recognition has arisen. According to Duffy (2009), one cannot construct a meaning unless he / she has experiences with the word meanings associated with a topic. Therefore, vocabulary instruction is crucial. Additionally, Willis (2008) indicates that students develop in skills of verbal fluency, writing and comprehension with enhanced vocabulary. In other words, the larger the students' vocabulary, the more adept they are at understanding texts.

Pirozzi (1995) emphasizes the importance of vocabulary stating that the more words you know, the easier you will comprehend the textbooks and lecture materials. Likewise, Dunmore (1989) claims that vocabulary expansion can lead to improvement in reading comprehension. Duffy and Israel (2009) indicate that word knowledge plays a very important part in reading comprehension. Thus, separating the two processes is difficult, if not impossible. This view can be illustrated as follows:

Vocabulary knowledge → Reading comprehension

There are other factors which affect reading comprehension. Duffy (2009) states that reading comprehension depends on prior knowledge or knowledge about the world. Moreover, prior knowledge is expressed with words. While comprehending, readers say to themselves, “In my experience with words associated with this topic or situation, the writer must mean something close to what I have experienced.” In other words, they use the words in the text to build a meaning which is consistent with their past experience with these words. There can be no comprehension without background knowledge. It has been estimated that as much as 50%-60% of successful comprehension is linked to background knowledge. Knowing something about the topic before beginning to read is essential to being able to construct meaning from a text.

Additionally, Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) indicate that efficient comprehension requires the ability to build a relationship between the textual material and one's own knowledge. Comprehending words, sentences, and whole texts involves more than only depending on one's linguistic knowledge. Likewise, Irwin (1991) notes that comprehension cannot occur if nothing is known before. Prior knowledge is so necessary for comprehension that it can often account for a large portion of the difference between successful and unsuccessful readers.

Another factor is reading speed. Nuttall (1996) asserts that the relationship between reading speed and comprehension is complex, yet they are closely related. A slow reader is likely to read with poor understanding, if only because his / her memory is taxed. That is to say, the beginning of a paragraph may be forgotten by the time he / she has struggled to the end of it. However, the cause and the effect are not clear. Do people read quickly because they understand easily, or do they understand easily because of their reading speed? In fact, each influences the other. Similarly, there is a strong relationship between speed and interest and enjoyment, because motivation spurs us to get to the end of the story as quickly as we can. Yet, the causal relationship is not clear. However, these facts suggest that students will improve their speed on material that is readily comprehensible and interesting to them more easily.

Certain dimensions are found in the process of reading comprehension. Block et al. (2002) state that the process of reading comprehension includes three dimensions: the reader, the text, and the activity. The reader must have a wide range of capacities and abilities in order to comprehend. Among these are cognitive capacities, motivation, and types of knowledge like vocabulary in addition to other types of knowledge such as domain and topic knowledge, and linguistic and discourse knowledge, purpose, interest, and abilities such as attention, memory, critical analytic ability, inferencing, and visualization ability. Text characteristics must match reader knowledge and abilities if we want optimal comprehension to occur. Finally, activity refers to the purpose of reading. Reading is done to accomplish some tasks. The reader has a purpose prior to reading which can be externally imposed (for example, a class assignment) or internally generated (playing a video).

Meaningful reading tasks are also important in comprehension. As Irwin (1991) notes, if we want to involve students in comprehension, firstly we must create situations in which the material being read is meaningful. That is to say, the reason for reading and understanding the material must make sense to the students. The students must read in order to get the meanings that will be beneficial to them.

Predicting helps to activate relevant background knowledge or schemata and set a purpose for their reading. Research carried out by Carrell (1989) showed that readers' formal schemata, or background knowledge about text structure, affect reading comprehension. EFL / ESL readers often bring quite different formal schemata to the reading of text. Making these expectations or mismatches explicit is regarded as a means of promoting greater comprehension of text and greater control of reading process.

As Erten and Razi (2009) indicate, cultural familiarity has positive effects on reading comprehension. If students are familiar with cultural norms, they make a better interpretation of the text than when they are not. In case of unfamiliar cultural norms, the result is poor interpretation of the text.

Comprehending written texts leads to various outcomes. Willis (2008) says that as comprehension increases, so does appreciation of reading for both pleasure and information. Constructing meaning from texts is not a separate literacy skill. Students need

to process actively what they read in order to be successful at reading comprehension. This processing skill requires that students have automatic reading skills and fluency, necessary vocabulary, and text-appropriate background knowledge. Likewise, O'Hara (2005) says that the more words one knows, the easier and faster he / she will be able to read. The comprehension will also improve.

Another issue that has been considered in ESL and EFL reading comprehension research is whether interest in or preference of a topic affects reading comprehension results. Although evidence is limited, there is some indication that being interested in a topic does not necessarily correlate positively with grades on reading comprehension tests. In other words; interest does not always lead to good comprehension (Peretz & Shoham, 1990).

Another factor which affects readers' abilities to comprehend texts is, as indicated by Shih (1992), is their repertoires of cognitive strategies for processing text as well as metacognitive strategies (the self-regulation of cognition) to monitor this processing. It is also indicated that poor readers can be trained in such active processing strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension. Likewise, Jones (1985) mentions that the reader's ability to control his or her own learning contributes significantly to the ability to comprehend. This ability is called metacognition and it involves the ability to plan, monitor comprehension and evaluate the learned material. Moreover, there is strong evidence that direct instruction in the use of metacognitive strategies can remarkably improve comprehension.

In conclusion, many factors affect the process of reading comprehension. These factors range from prior and vocabulary knowledge to reading speed. As noted earlier, prior knowledge is essential for comprehension. Comprehension is also related to the purpose of reading. Metacognitive strategies also influence comprehension, since the readers can evaluate and monitor their comprehension.

2.8. The Purposes of Reading

What is the reader's purpose in reading? According to Hellyer et al. (2001), people read for many different purposes. Mainly, there are two purposes for reading, namely,

reading for pleasure (enjoyment) and reading for information (learning). It is also the case that pleasure and learning can be combined. For example, one does not read a murder mystery the same way he / she reads a recipe. Mainly, there are two purposes for reading: reading for pleasure and reading for information. When reading for pleasure, one is completely free about how, when, and what to read. One can skip the information, skim through the story, or stop reading if bored. When reading for information, on the other hand, one needs to be very careful, because the reader needs to be sure to get all the information needed. It differs greatly from reading for pleasure, since the primary purpose is to learn information. Therefore, one needs to read more seriously and carefully.

It is apparent that readers read texts with different purposes in their minds. As Alderson (2000) states, if we want to get a general idea of the text content, we will pay little attention to the detail of the text, and we may read in very different ways when studying a text in order to identify key information. So, we may need various skills suited to these different purposes. Therefore, the reason we are reading a text will affect the way we read it, the skills we require or use, and the ultimate understanding and recall extracted from that text. Reading a short story for pleasure must be different from reading a history text for an examination the next morning.

As briefly discussed, reading is an activity done with various purposes. As teachers, we deal with reading for information in our classes. For this very reason, we expect our students to read for information, and use the appropriate skills or strategies.

2.9. The Role of Reading in EFL

Reading is inevitably an important skill for English learners. In many parts of the world, the most emphasized skill in EFL situations has been reading. Singhal (1998) regards the ability to read as the most stable and durable of the second language modalities. In other words, reading plays a vital role in teaching EFL. Paris (2005) claims that learning to read is one of the great achievements in childhood, due to the fact that it is the basis for learning and academic success. Furthermore, Grabe (1991) mentions that reading is probably the most important skill for EFL learners in academic contexts. However, according to Rivas (1999), reading should not be dealt with in isolation. She adds that

reading is a use of language, therefore it needs to be integrated with the other language skills.

According to Richards and Renandya (2002), reading receives special attention in many EFL teaching situations. There are certain reasons for this. Firstly, many EFL students often think of reading as one of their most important goals. It is a fact that the ability to read in a foreign language is all that students want to acquire. Secondly, written texts have various pedagogical purposes. If a text is well written, it may be a good model for writing and stimulate discussion and study the vocabulary and grammar of language. To conclude, reading is a skill highly valued by both students and teachers.

In the long history of EFL, reading has always played the most important role, but until recently, it meant reading aloud special texts, building a grammatical structure, explaining the unknown vocabulary, and answering comprehension questions. The developments in sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and psycholinguistics have revitalized both the selection of the teaching materials and the teaching approach. An important factor which influenced the design of new teaching materials is that there have been changes in the understanding of the nature of the reading process. In the light of the findings of both research and theory, reading is no longer viewed as a passive skill or a process of decoding. On the contrary, it is viewed as an active or better as an interactive skill, since it is accepted (proven) that readers interact with the text while reading (Bindaka, 2007).

The stated goal of most of the education legislation is for all students to learn how to read. The goal of many educators goes beyond this fact, that is, for students to learn not only the mechanics of reading and reading comprehension, but also to develop a love of reading. Thus, they will not consider reading as a burden (Willis, 2008).

According to Grabe (1991), research on reading in a second language and efforts to improve foreign language reading instruction have grown remarkably particularly in the last decades. The recognition that reading is probably the most important skill for second language learners in academic contexts has been a contributing cause. This view is also shared by Nuttall (1996).

Most of the current views on ESL / EFL reading are shaped by research on first language learners. A primary goal for EFL reading theory and instruction is to understand what fluent first language readers do, then decide how best to move EFL students in that developmental direction (Grabe, 1991). Lee and Schallert (1997) claim that readers will not be able to read effectively unless they develop some proficiency in the target language.

Detailed studies of EFL reading has been going on for decades. Carrell (1989) states that reading may be the most important of the four skills for ESL and EFL students. In a preliminary study conducted among secondary school students in the Seville province of Spain, reading preceded speaking, listening and writing in that order on a rank scale of 1-4 for preferences between the four skills. In the same study, researchers used a seven point bipolar scale for student's views about the skills, using symbols only (--- / -- / - / 0 / + / ++ / +++). The results showed a bunching for reading around the positive end of the scale (++), whereas speaking pointed out a double hump around the negative (--) and the positive (++) ends.

Additionally, there is a relationship between reading and writing. Zamel (1992) argues that writing is the foundation of reading, and the most basic way of learning about reading. Writing makes reading an activity of finding and making connections. It is a way of constructing and composing reading.

In brief, teachers of EFL should be aware of the fact that a means of perceiving the foreign language is through reading. We simply cannot expect our students to be successful readers unless we emphasize its importance in our classes. In addition, we must try to make our students appreciate the value of reading.

2.10. Ideas on Teaching Reading

It is essential that the teachers of EFL know how to teach reading effectively. According to Willis (2008), reading cannot be seen as a natural part of language development. Unlike spoken language, reading does not follow from observation and imitation of other people. For this very reason, there are a number of facts, which must be taken into consideration. Alyousef (2005) indicates that any reading component of an English language course may include a set of learning goals for:

- the ability to teach a wide range of text in English. This is the long-term goal which most teachers intend to develop through independent readers outside EFL / ESL classroom;
- building a knowledge of language which will facilitate the ability to read;
- building schematic knowledge;
- the ability to adapt the reading style according to the purpose of reading (i.e. skimming & scanning);
- developing an awareness of the structure of written texts in English;
- taking a critical stance to the contents of the texts.

As noted by Nuttall (1996), teaching reading does not mean that we will exclude speaking, listening and writing. It is an issue of focus: some lessons dwell on reading while others do not. The other skills are always needed, to provide variety (e.g. sometimes listening to a text while being read aloud), to enable the students to learn effectively (e.g. discussing the text) or to give you feedback (e.g. preparing written work based on the text). In a reading lesson, we want the students to use the language in order to derive messages from the texts. The meaning is central, and the newly learnt language items are an incidental benefit.

There exist differences between first and second language reading. Singhal (1998) says that second language research on reading is frequently regarded as being marginal and derivate from first language reading. Although there are similarities between reading in a first and second language, a number of complex variables make the process of first language different from second language. Since the reading process is essentially "unobservable", teachers need to make significant efforts in the classroom in order to understand their students' reading behaviours and to be able to help students understand those behaviours as well. It is therefore essential that teachers know as much as possible about the cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds of their readers, due to the fact that many of these factors influence reading in a second language context.

It is generally accepted that first language reading ability transfers to second language reading. Nuttall (1996) indicates that some students do not read efficiently in

their first language. This prevents the development of efficient reading in the foreign language since there is a strong transfer of reading habits from one language to another. Alderson (2000) supports this view stating that once reading ability has been acquired in the first language, it can be used in the foreign language. If first language reading abilities are poor, it should be improved.

It has also been reported that the use of reading ability and strategy depend on language proficiency. Taglieber et al. (1988) indicate that EFL students find it difficult simultaneously to remember earlier textual information, predict what is coming, and connect phrase and sentence meanings, mainly because of the interference from unfamiliar words and grammatical patterns. Thus, the level of language proficiency affects reading ability.

There are certain goals of reading instruction. According to Janzen and Stoller (1998), the ultimate aim is to help students become more like expert readers. The short-term goal is to enable students to make sense of the text which they read. Less successful readers have difficulty understanding what they are reading. They often continue the process of reading with a limited comprehension instead of actively engaging with the text to deepen their understanding.

Similarly, Nuttall (1996) notes that the focus in the reading lesson is neither language, nor content, but both, that is, how language is used for conveying content for a purpose. We want our students to develop the ability to extract the content from the language that expresses it, and to become effective and independent readers. An ideal reader is the one who would be able to extract the content from any text at all; but of course such a reader does not exist, since he / she would need both complete mastery of the language, and mastery of every area of knowledge. Therefore, we must push students as far as possible towards becoming ideal readers for their own purposes so that they can deal with any kind of text they are likely to encounter.

An important part of the teacher's task must be to enable the students to become more self-aware readers. Nuttall (1996) proposes an overall aim for the reading programme: To make students to enjoy, or at least feel at ease when reading in the foreign language, and to read without help unfamiliar texts, at appropriate speed, silently and with

adequate understanding. Likewise, Akūnal (1988) notes that the objective of a reading lesson must be to encourage the reader to rely less on the text at word level, and help them develop attitudes toward making predictions and tolerating mispredictions if they are not confirmed while processing the text.

The teachers must take certain points into account in reading classes. As Irwin (1991) states, better methods of teaching which involve learners in meaningful tasks are needed, if we expect them to create meaning on their own. In other words, teachers should intend to make reading classes meaningful, as well as enjoyable for their students. Additionally, Duffy (2009) emphasizes an important point, saying that if we want to motivate students to read, we must do two things; first, we ourselves must have a vision of what the main thing is in reading; second, we must create tasks or activities that give students experience doing them. Furthermore, Willis (2008) indicates that in the process of reading, we can achieve our goals when students receive instruction in a non-threatening, engaging, and effective way.

According to some researchers, reading can be taught, providing that the teacher keeps in mind and follow certain points. One example is Nuttall (1996). She indicates the teacher's responsibilities as follows:

- enjoying and valuing reading ourselves, and showing that to our students by reading a lot at;
helping our students to enjoy and value reading;
- understanding what reading involves, how language carries meanings and how texts are put together;
- finding out what the students can and cannot do, and designing a programme to develop the skills they lack;
- choosing suitable texts to work on;
- choosing or devising effective tasks and activities;
- preparing the students to undertake the tasks;
- making sure that everyone works productively by encouraging students,
- promoting text-focused discussion and providing “scaffolding” to make them interpret the text themselves, rather than depending on the teacher;

- monitoring progress to make sure that every student in the class improves steadily according to their own capabilities.

We should keep in mind that a reading lesson should be divided into pre-reading, during-reading and after-reading stages. These stages are essential in a reading class. Brown (2001) has described the following three-part framework:

- (1) **Before reading:** Spend some time introducing a topic by encouraging skimming, scanning, predicting and activating schemata. Students can bring the best of their knowledge and skills to a text when they are given a chance to “ease into” a text.
- (2) **While reading:** Not all reading is simply extensive or global. There can be certain facts or rhetorical devices that should be noted by students while they read. We should give students a sense of purpose for reading rather than reading because they were told to do so.
- (3) **After reading:** Comprehension questions are a form of activity which is appropriate for post-reading. We should also consider vocabulary study, identifying the purpose, discussing the line of reasoning, examining grammatical structures, or leading students toward a follow-up writing exercise.

The reasons why students fail in reading are also within the scope of the researchers. Nuttall (1996) suggests the following topics associated with reading failure: *negative expectations, unsuitable tasks, the wrong procedures, expecting them to run before they can walk; in addition, the wrong texts*. For this reason, we must choose foreign language books that are enjoyable and easy to read. This is important both for the teacher and the students. It is possible to develop reading skills on boring texts. Interesting content makes the learner’s task much more rewarding. This is the reason why publishers of EFL readers offer well written materials.

There have been debates about the best method of teaching reading over the years. Willis (2008) claims that with all the data from the continued research of the past years, the scientific and educational communities have not reached agreement on the best way to teach reading. Similarly, Parry (1996) notes that the best teaching method is an ideal which cannot be attained, because of the differences in cultural backgrounds of students.

An activity may work well with one group, but it may fail in another. Thus, teachers must find out what is most appropriate for students.

In summary, if we want to teach how to read effectively, we should be aware of our goals, choose the right materials for our students motivate our students and show them that reading can be an enjoyable activity if we pay attention to certain rules. It is generally thought that reading is a passive activity. In fact, we should engage our students actively in the reading process in order to make them self-aware readers. We should also find methods of teaching in order to create active readers.

2.11. The Stages of a Reading Lesson

The reader goes through certain stages of reading in order to comprehend and respond to a written text. In other words, the reader engages in different activities in these stages. The aim of these features is to help the reader learn to read. The stages mentioned are *before reading* (pre-reading), *during reading* (while reading), and *after reading* (post reading). Miller (2006) states that readers activate their prior knowledge before, during and after reading.

In *before reading*, as noted by Miller (2006), a reader may use various strategies to link new information to prior knowledge, and to predict the gist of the content of the text. Among these strategies are mentally reviewing previously acquired information; skimming the title, headings, questions and graphics; making hypotheses and predictions about the text's content or structure; self-questioning; pre-learning new vocabulary, and so on. These strategies all activate existing schemata or knowledge structures.

According to Taglieber et al., (1988), pre-reading activities intend to activate appropriate knowledge structures, or to provide knowledge that the reader lacks. Duffy (2009) mentions that a crucial before-reading question is: "Why am I reading this?" He adds that having a viable reason for reading is the key to motivation. Willis (2008) indicates that pre-reading prepares students for the content, focus, and organization of the material. The goal of pre-reading is to supply students with an overview of the topic, book or story to be read. In this way, they can develop mental templates upon which to pattern the new information.

Additionally, Rivas (1999) emphasizes the need for schema activation before reading. If the students lack the appropriate schemata, they should be provided with them. In fact, these are the two main functions of pre-reading activities, which seek students' involvement, interest, motivation besides providing preparation for language.

However, it is difficult to say that all EFL teachers take this fact into consideration. Alyousef (2005) mentions that most teachers tend to neglect the pre-reading procedure, since they claim that they do not have enough time. However, pre-reading activities motivate students before the actual reading takes place. For instance, the teacher can ask questions which arouse the students' interest while previewing the text.

Basically, there are three pre-reading methods: pictorial context, pre-questioning and pre-teaching vocabulary. These three methods are intended to help EFL students overcome three major problems interfering with their reading: (a) lack of vocabulary knowledge, (b) difficulty in using language cues to meaning, and (c) lack of conceptual knowledge (Taglieber et al., 1988). Akūnal (1988) states that the purpose of pre-reading questions is to focus readers on the core message of the written material and help them develop reading skills. The questions must require thoughtful answers.

Prediction is among the pre-reading methods. Nuttall (1996) indicates that prediction is important, because it activates schemata; that is to say, it calls into mind any experiences and associated knowledge that we already have about the topic of the text. Prediction also helps us to make sense of the sentences even if the first word sets up expectancies of what the next word will be, and as the sentence develops, our ability to predict what comes next often increases.

According to Duffy (2009), readers naturally make predictions. More proficient readers make predictions while reading an expository text. Duffy also concludes that prediction is based on the thoughtful use of prior knowledge, and it is an example of how readers actively construct meaning. He defines prediction as the beginning of the process of looking for meaning. Readers make predictions depending on purpose for reading, topic clues, and the type of text which is being read.

The second stage is *during reading*. As Jones (1985) notes, in *during reading*, the reader begins to refine earlier predictions and hypotheses, noting what is important and unimportant, as well as what is clear and unclear. The reader may use any of the several strategies to encode and recall what is being read; that is, generative underlining, inferring the main idea, elaborating the text, forming analogies, answering questions associated with the text. Alyousef (2005) sets the aim of this stage as developing students' ability in tackling texts by means of developing their linguistic and schematic knowledge. Moreover, Jiao (2007) asserts that reading task focuses on the developing students' reading skills, trains students in applying reading strategies and improves their control in English.

According to Duffy (2009) the most important during-reading strategy is the cycle of predict-monitor and re-predict. This cycle is repeated over and over again as the reader proceeds through the text. As Rivas (1999) puts it, the main goals of the while-reading phase are strategy and skill practice, and linguistic development besides helping learners to understand the writer's purpose, the text structure and the content.

After reading activities, like the ones in during reading, depend on the purpose for reading. As Jones (1985) notes, if the information is not to be processed in depth, memorized, or assessed for comprehension and retention, it is likely to have a few after-reading activities. However, if it is to be learned, the reader may engage in a number of activities to study what was read or monitor his or her own comprehension. At this point, the reader can outline or summarize a text, look back to check for mislearning, or reread what was unclear. According to Jiao (2007), post reading task checks students' comprehension and leads them to a deeper understanding of the text.

Duffy (2009) emphasizes an important point, stating that good readers reflect after they read. They ask questions to themselves such as: "Did I find out what I wanted to find out?", "Is what I found out important or accurate?", or "How can I use what I read?" Rivas (1999) states the goal of this stage noting that the post-reading stage helps learners to consolidate what they have read, and, at the same time, aims to relate the text to the learners' experience, knowledge and opinions.

In brief, basically there are three stages of reading: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. Pre-reading activities prepare the students for reading the text. They help the students gain an idea of what the text will be about and this increases their motivation to read. While- reading activities improve the students' ability to interact and understand the text. Post- reading activities help students to critically analyze what they have read. Post-reading activities also increase the students' understanding of the text. Reading lessons should be planned in a pre, during, and post reading framework.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

3.1. Overview

This chapter presents the design of the research, the selection of the participants, the instruments, the procedure of data collection, the methods used to analyze the data and the procedure. This study is mainly concerned about finding an answer to the question whether reading skills affects the comprehension ability of preparatory year students. This study was conducted during 14 weeks in the spring term of the 2008-2009 academic year in order to find answers to the research questions. The data were collected by means of pre-test and post test, Reading Skills Questionnaire, which were supported by interviews.

3.2. Research Design

The aim of this study is to find out if reading skills can enhance comprehension ability of 50 students in the preparatory year. Qualitative and quantitative research designs were both used in the study. This study presents data about the development of reading skills of the participants and their perceptions and attitudes towards reading. The data were gathered through pre-test and post test, Reading Skills Questionnaire, which were supported by interviews. This study has pre-test post-test control / experimental group design, which is called the traditional experimental design by Muijs (2004).

3.3. The Participants

The participants of the study are 50 preparatory year students at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü Imam University. They are students of economy, business administration and public administration. The participants in both groups are in level C. According to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), the level of the participants is between A2 (Waystage) and B1 (Threshold). In other words, they can understand very basic phrases or communicate in simple and routine tasks. They attended state schools and Anatolian High Schools prior to the preparatory year, so their levels of proficiency differ from each other. All of them had English classes in their high schools; however, their outcomes and language aims are different. They attend two classes. One group is the

control group and the other is the experimental group. As was observed before the study started, the participants in the control group had lower marks than the ones in the experimental group in quizzes and mid-term exams. There are 24 participants in the control group and 26 participants in the experimental group. In the control group, there are 11 male students and 13 female students. In the experimental group, there are 7 male students and 19 female students.

Ten participants were chosen randomly for the interviews regardless of gender, age and proficiency level. 50 students, 18 of who were male and 32 were female participated in this study. However, the data were gathered from 20 students chosen randomly. 8 of them were male and 12 were female. Their ages range between 18 and 21. The participants have been attending English classes for 28 hours a week throughout the year. They come from various social and economic backgrounds.

3.4. The Procedure

The participants had 28 hours of English classes throughout the year. They were informed about the study at the beginning of the term. The study lasted 14 weeks. The experiment group received the treatment. The control group did traditional reading classes in accordance with the curriculum of the department. In other words, the control group maintained the classes according to the units of the course book (New English File). The Department of Foreign Languages at KSU has accepted Common European Language Framework (2001) as the curriculum of the preparatory classes. That is to say, the language skills are taught in accordance with this framework. According to this framework, A2 readers can read very short, simple texts. They can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, and timetables, and they can understand short simple personal letters. B1 readers can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. They can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters. The participants of this study are between levels A2 and B1. The Ministry of Education assumes that the students' level is B1 when they finish high school. However, their level is closer to A2 level.

The experimental group received training for two hours a week. The researcher was the instructor of both groups. The lesson plans were prepared by the researcher and

checked by two other colleagues. There were two important points in preparing the lesson plans. The first was infusing the reading skills into the curriculum and the second was finding reading texts and which would help the participants gain the reading skills. In other words, students were expected to accomplish meaningful reading. This can be achieved if new knowledge matches the knowledge stored before. In addition, the aim and content of the class was determined beforehand. The weekly schedule of the study prepared in accordance with the Common European Language Framework can be seen in the table below:

Table 3.1. The weekly schedule of the study

Two weeks before the start of the training	Pilot study
Week 1	Pre-test, Reading Skills Questionnaire and recognizing definitions and examples (understanding how terms are defined and exemplified)
Week 2	Interview, recognizing enumerations (identifying the sequence of events)
Week 3	Recognizing headings and subheadings (identifying titles)
Week 4	Recognizing signal words (identifying the following information)
Week 5	Recognizing main ideas in paragraphs (identifying the main point)
Week 6	Recognizing the contextual clues for vocabulary (extracting meanings of unknown vocabulary)
Week 7	Recognizing the organization of a text (making outlines)
Week 8	Recognizing the aim of the author (extracting writer's message)
Week 9	Recognizing the genre of a text and arguments (finding the type and identifying arguments)
Week 10	Evaluating the text (discussing the text)
Week 11	Recognizing the role of background knowledge (understanding the role of schemata)

Table 3.1. (Continue)

Week 12	Scanning to locate specifically required information and understanding explicitly stated information (finding out details and language devices)
Week 13	Transcoding information to diagrammatic display (extracting meaning from pictures and illustrations), Post-test
Week 14	Reading Skills Questionnaire, interview & a short training programme with the control group

The classes included three stages: pre-reading, during-reading and post reading. The reading skills were involved especially in pre-reading and during-reading stages. Apart from the reading texts, the participants were asked to fill in charts such as KWL chart (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learned).

Before the training period, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot study lasted two weeks. The researcher checked the level of difficulty of the texts and elicited feedback from the participants. The difficulties were cleared up depending on the feedbacks. When the training with the experimental group was finished, a short-term training on reading skills was conducted with the control group as well.

3.4.1. Pre-reading Activities

The aim of pre-reading activities was to draw the participants' attention on the topic, and achieve their involvement. Pre-reading activities also aimed to activate the participants' background knowledge, or schemata, relevant to the topic. By this way, the participants were expected to make connections between their own experiences and the newly presented topics. The participants were expected to make predictions on the topic and pre-questioning by means of looking at the title, pictures or illustrations. Pre-reading activities also aimed at arousing interest in the reading materials. In other words, these activities helped the participants picture the overview of the texts to be read. The researcher made use of questions in order to activate the students' prior knowledge and talk as much as possible about the text they were expected to read. This stage lasted a couple of

minutes. The KWL chart was also used at this point. The students filled in the part “What I Want to Know?” before reading the text (see Appendix 9).

Pre-reading activities also helped the participants gain new vocabulary. This was achieved by semantic mapping. This helped the students activate their background knowledge. The titles or key concepts of the texts were chosen for semantic mapping. The students wrote the related concepts in the bubbles.

3.4.2. During Reading Activities

As reading is thought of being an active process, the students were expected to participate in the activities. According to Bedir (1998), if readers are not involved in the process, they might not be willing to participate in the active process which is expected to enhance comprehension. In during reading stage, the students interact with each other and with the text. In this stage, the researcher read the text out loud and the students followed it silently. In other words, this stage required the students to involve in overall understanding and detailed (intensive) understanding of the texts. The researcher asked spontaneous questions from time to time in order to make the students remember what they already know about the text. They were usually asked what the next paragraph would be about. As the students encountered new words in the text, they were told to guess the meanings from the text using context clues or ignore them. The students underlined the important parts and new words during this process.

In during reading stage, the students checked their guesses about what they were going to read through semantic mapping and the KWL chart (What I Want to Know). Additionally, in this stage, the researcher introduced the reading skills such as using contextual clues, finding the main idea, recognizing signal words, examples and definitions. Accordingly, Jiao (2007) asserts that during reading stage focuses on the development of students’ reading skills and trains them in applying reading strategies.

3.4.3. Post Reading Activities

The post reading stage is the stage of integrating the new information from the text with other language skills. According to Jiao (2007), reading skills must relate reading to

other skills by means of activities. For this reason, the instructor directed the students to do a variety of activities.

In the post reading stage, the students were required to do follow-up activities. They were also required to reply the comprehension questions to indicate the extent of comprehension. In this stage, the students checked their own comprehension. They achieved this by summarizing the text or rereading if they did not comprehend the text sufficiently. The students reflected on the text by checking the questions in their minds. In addition to comprehension, the students had to process the new information in depth for retention. By doing so, they monitored their own comprehension. They did various activities such as outlining or summarizing the texts (oral or written), discussion and vocabulary exercises (see Appendix 6). These writing activities constituted the production stage, which is the basic component of post reading activities in addition to comprehension.

In this stage, two processes were carried out: in-depth processing and response processing. As the name suggests, in in-depth processing, the students constructed detailed meaning of words. They did this by means of comparing, clarifying and predicting. While comparing, the semantic maps were compared. The students added new information to the maps and compared them with the previous information they had come up with in pre-reading stage. While clarifying, the students found the unknown words and discussed them. They also formed questions which were not answered in the text. In response processing, the students summarized the text and answered the questions. They did this by checking the underlined parts in the text. Bedir (1998) indicates that during this process the students create or expand schemata which can be used later.

3.5. Instruments

The Reading Skills Questionnaire was designed by the researcher considering the skills used while reading by Langan (1992) and Pirozzi (1995). The questionnaire consisted of 18 statements. The statements were translated into Turkish by the researcher and checked by two other colleagues in order to prevent misinterpretations. In order to overcome bias problems, grouping categorization was done by these colleagues in the department. The statements in the questionnaire were closed and scaled. That is to say,

there were five scales: “Always”, “Usually”, “Sometimes”, “Rarely” and “Never”. It was conducted at the beginning of the study (before the training started) in order to find out if the participants are aware of the reading skills, and if so what reading skills they have. This questionnaire was also conducted at the end of the study to check if any difference occurred in reading skills of the participants during the study. The Reading Skills Questionnaire aimed to investigate both Reading Skills and Microskills for Reading (the latter was indicated by Alderson, 2000). The tables below illustrate the skills and items included in each scale (Table 3.2 and 3.3).

Table 3.2. Reading skills and questionnaire items

	Reading Skills	Item Number
1	Recognizing definitions and examples	8, 10
2	Recognizing enumerations	5
3	Recognizing headings and subheadings	1
4	Recognizing signal words	7
5	Recognizing main ideas in paragraphs and short selections	6
6	Recognizing the contextual clues for vocabulary	9
7	Recognizing the organization of the text	12
8	Recognizing the aim of the author	17
9	Recognizing the genre of a text	15
10	Recognizing arguments	11
11	Evaluating the text	13, 16
12	Recognizing the role of background knowledge	3, 14
	Micro Skills	Item Number
1	Scanning to locate specifically required information	4
2	Understanding information when not explicitly stated	18
3	Transcoding information to diagrammatic display	2

Item 1 aimed to find out whether the participants made use of prediction; which is an essential component of the pre-reading stage. As noted by Nuttall (1996), prediction activates schemata and enables readers to make sense of the texts. Item 2 refers to a

microskill indicated by Alderson (2000); that is, transcoding information to diagrammatic display. This microskill is related to a pre-reading method; pictorial context.

Item 3 aimed to figure out the role of background knowledge. This skill is related to activating schema (schema theory), which has been investigated by many researchers, one of who is Carrell (1983). Item 4 refers to a microskill; scanning to locate specifically required information. Alderson (2000) notes that scanning is used when readers search the specific details in a text. Scanning requires vocabulary knowledge and this leads to comprehension.

Item 5 is a skill indicated by Langan (1992). Enumerators are outstanding words which aid the readers comprehend texts. Recognizing main ideas and supporting details in texts is an important reading skill. Item 6 refers to it. Pirozzi (1995) attaches importance to the main idea, noting that it is the summary statement of the rest of the paragraph.

Signal words, like enumerators help the readers recognize the important information which is to come up. Item 7 is about the recognition of signal words in sentences. Item 8 and 10 refer to recognizing definitions and examples in texts. As observed by the researcher, many students complain about unknown vocabulary in texts, claiming that this results in getting bad marks in reading sections of examinations. Since they are not allowed to use dictionaries during examinations, this poses a problem for them. Langan (1992) states that it is a crucial skill that must be acquired by readers of EFL.

There exist many types of contextual clues. Item 9 is related to using them during the process of reading. As indicated by Davidson (2006), contextual clues constitute the hints for meaning. This leads to the idea that dictionary meanings are not always necessary. Recognizing arguments is another skill which is included in Item 11. This skill requires a deeper understanding of the text.

Item 12 refers to the organization of a text. A text must be written not only by putting the sentences together. The sentences must follow each other in a logical order. They must follow a sequence of events in a narrative text, for example. Evaluating text is another reading skill which is included in items 13 and 16. Duffy (2009) mentions that reading requires making judgments about the message. It is the reader who evaluates what a writer is saying. In addition, it can be learned at all grade levels.

The role of background knowledge in the process of reading has been investigated by many researchers. According to Willis (2008), we can activate the students' background knowledge through discussions about topics that are interesting for them. This skill is included in items 3 and 14. Item 15 refers to the genre or type of a text. Alderson (2000) notes that writing on different topics leads to different types of texts. We cannot write about how a car works in a narrative text, for example.

Item 17 refers to recognizing the writer's aim in the text. That is to say, a skilled reader is the one who can understand if the writer is trying to influence others through using propaganda. This skill also involves distinguishing facts from opinions, as noted by Duffy (2009). Item 18 refers to understanding explicitly stated information. It is a microskill mentioned by Alderson (2000).

The other instrument employed to collect data for this study was the formal interview. The questions of the interview were prepared by the researcher. It was conducted both at the beginning and at the end of the study to find out whether the participants used the reading skills efficiently.

The last instrument used in this study was the pre-test and the post test. These were given to the participants at the beginning and at the end of the study. The questions included comprehension questions and multiple choice questions as suggested by Alderson (2000).

3.6. Data Collection

After the pilot study, which was conducted in the first two weeks of the spring term, the participants were given the questionnaire. The aim was to determine whether the participants were aware of the reading skills. The items of the questionnaire were adapted by the studies conducted by Carrell (1989). It contained five scales. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items and was translated into Turkish by the researcher. It was checked for mistakes by one other colleague in order to prevent misinterpretations. The translated version of the questionnaire was shown to the students on OHP. The participants filled in the questionnaires in 30 minutes allotted to them. They were expected to be sincere in

replying the questions. The same questionnaire was also administered at the end of the spring term to indicate the changes in the participants' reading comprehension ability, if occurred any.

Apart from the questionnaire, a pre-test and a post-test were administered to find out if any significant difference occurred between the two groups. The questions were adapted from a proficiency book and a textbook for TOEFL exams. Both the pre-test and the post test contained 25 questions. The questions were multiple choice and comprehension questions.

The other instrument used to collect data was the formal interview. The interview was conducted with 10 participants from each group regardless of age and gender. The participants were interviewed by the researcher in her office one by one. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed in order to support the data. The aim was to check whether there had been a meaningful change in the participants' skills.

3.7. Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analyzed through a statistical programme, SPSS (a Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 15.0. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire, the quizzes and the pre-test and post-test were analyzed through this programme. The qualitative data from the interviews conducted to support the quantitative data were analyzed through content analysis.

The participants' responses to the Reading Skills Questionnaire were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, a non parametric test which used to find out whether there has been a meaningful change between the responses of the participants at the beginning and at the end of the study. Descriptive statistics were found out and N, rank values, z and p value were found out.

The pre-test and post test were conducted in order to find out whether any meaningful difference occurred before and after the training. The data gathered from the related groups, experimental pre- and post for example, were analyzed through Wilcoxon

Matched- Pairs Signed Rank Test. The data gathered from the independent groups were analyzed through Mann-Whitney U- Wilcoxon Rank Sum W Test.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter of the study presents the analysis of the data and findings gathered from questionnaires, the pre-test and the post-test, tests and interviews.

4.1. Introduction

This case study aims to find out whether there has been any effect of reading skills on the participants' reading comprehension ability. In order to achieve this purpose, the lesson plans were prepared in order to infuse the reading skills into students' regular English Preparatory Programme, constituting a total of 28 class hours a week. In order to collect data, the questionnaire was administered to the participants at the beginning and at the end of the study. The pre-test and the post-test were also administered. In addition, interviews were analyzed to support the data. The following sections present the research findings gathered from the pre-test and the post-test, questionnaires, and interviews respectively.

4.2. Analysis of the Quantitative and Qualitative Data

The quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques were administered in the analysis of the data collected by means of pre-test and post-test, questionnaires, tests and interviews.

4.2.1. Analysis of the Pre-test and Post-test

The pre-test administered at the beginning of the study consisted of 25 questions prepared to assess the predetermined reading skills. The skills were selected among those indicated by Langan (1992), Pirozzi (1995) and Alderson (2000). The participants were expected to show their knowledge of the reading skills. The post-test administered at the end of the study also consisted of 25 questions. The aim was to find out whether there occurred to be a change in the comprehension ability of the participants. The data collected from the related groups, for example experimental pre- and post-, were analyzed through Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The data collected from the independent groups were

analyzed through Mann-Whitney U – Wilcoxon Rank Sum W Test. The tables below illustrate the findings.

Table 4.1. Pre-test and post-test of the control group

TESTS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean Rank	Std. Deviation
PRE	24	20,00	72,00	50,5000	8,00	13,64456
POST	24	32,00	76,00	54,5000	11,94	12,74840

Z Value: -2,744

P Value (2-tailed): 0,06

As seen in Table 4.1 above, there is a significant difference between the pre- and post-test results of the control group, since the p value is 0,06 and z value is -2,744. The table illustrates the descriptive analysis of the results of the control group. In the table, it is seen that the mean of the pre- and post-test did rise significantly. The grades in the pre-test are between 20 and 72 with a 13,64456 standard deviation and those in the post-test are between 32 and 76 with a lower (12,74840) standard deviation. The mean of the results rose from 50, 5000 to 54,5000. Table 4.2 shows the results of the pre- and post-test of the experimental group.

Table 4.2. Pre-test and post-test of the experimental group

TESTS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean Rank	Std. Deviation
PRE	26	32,00	80,00	53,3846	,00	13,94583
POST	26	48,00	92,00	74,6154	13,50	10,78917

Z Value: -4,466

P Value (2-tailed) : ,000

The results illustrated in the Table 4.2 above indicates that there is a statistically significant change at ,000 level between the pre- and post tests of the experimental group. The results indicate that the mean value of the experimental group increased in the post-

test when compared to that of the control group. In addition, the standard deviation is lower in the post-test when compared to that of the pre-test. The minimum grade was 32 and maximum grade was 80 in the pre-test. They became 48 minimum and 92 maximum in the post-test. This yields a remarkable increase in the post-test results of the experimental group. In addition, the standard deviation value is lower in the pre-test than the post-test. Table 4.3 below displays the analysis of the pre-test results of the control and experimental groups.

Table 4.3. Pre-tests of the control and experimental group

PRE-TESTS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean Rank	Std. Deviation
CONT	24	20,00	80,00	52,0000	24,10	13,73807
EXP	26	32,00	80,00	53,3846	26,79	13,94583

Z Value: -,653

P Value (2-tailed): ,513

The results obtained from the pre-tests of the control and experimental groups indicate that there is no significant difference between the groups, since the p value is ,513 and z value is -,653.

The results in the table above indicate that the minimum grades of the experimental group's pre-test were higher than those of the control group. The minimum grade in the control group is 20,00, whereas it is 32,00 in the experimental group. However, the maximum grades were the same (80,00). There is not a remarkable difference between the mean and standard deviation values in both groups.

Table 4.4 below shows the analysis of the post-test results of the control and experimental groups.

Table 4.4. Post-tests of the control and experimental group

POST-TESTS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean Rank	Std. Deviation
CONT	24	32,00	76,00	54,5000	15,38	12,74840
EXP	26	48,00	92,00	74,6154	34,85	10,78917

Z Value: -4,737

P Value (2-tailed) : ,000

As can be seen from the table above, there is a statistically significant difference between the post-test results of the control and experimental groups at ,000 level. In other words, there is a remarkable difference between the two groups. These results indicated above can be related to the training programme conducted with the experimental group.

The pre-test results of both groups did not yield a remarkable difference as seen in table 5.4. However, as seen from the table above, there is a remarkable difference between the two groups. The students in the experimental group increased their mean value from 53,3846 to 74,6154. The students in the control group did not demonstrate the same performance, however. They increased their mean value from 52,000 to 54,5000 (see Table 4.3).

4.2.2. Analysis of the Reading Skills Questionnaires Supported by Interviews

The Reading Skills Questionnaire administered at the beginning of the study consisted of 20 items. The second item will be analyzed descriptively, since it is not a close statement. The items were written considering the reading skills indicated by Langan (1992), Pirozzi (1995) and Alderson (2000). The items were adapted and developed from the questionnaire used by Carrell (1989) in a study.

The students were directed to display their preferences on a five-point scale questionnaire as “Always”, “Usually”, “Sometimes”, “Rarely” and “Never”. The same questionnaire was also administered at the end of the study in order to figure out whether there existed any changes in the preferences of the participants. In data analysis, SPSS 15.0, a statistical programme for social sciences was used. The numericals 5,4,3,2, and 1

were used for “Always”, “Usually”, “Sometimes”, “Rarely” and “Never” respectively. The data were analyzed through 2-Related Samples, Wilcoxon Test among non-parametric tests.

Table 4.5 displays the data obtained from the pre- and post questionnaire of the experimental group.

Table 4.5. Pre- and post questionnaire of the control group

PRE-POST		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	P (Two-Tailed)
1.	Negative Ranks	6	9,42	56,50	-.206	.837
	Positive Ranks	9	7,06	63,50		
	Ties	9				
	Total	24				
2.	Negative Ranks	9	9,11	82,00	-.537	.592
	Positive Ranks	10	10,80	108,00		
	Ties	5				
	Total	24				
3.	Negative Ranks	8	12,38	99,00	-.228	.820
	Positive Ranks	12	9,25	111,00		
	Ties	4				
	Total	24				
4.	Negative Ranks	8	8,81	70,50	-.287	.774
	Positive Ranks	9	9,17	82,50		
	Ties	7				
	Total	24				
5.	Negative Ranks	8	7,25	58,00	-.538	.590
	Positive Ranks	8	9,75	78,00		
	Ties	8				
	Total	24				
6.	Negative Ranks	6	7,75	46,50	-.789	.430
	Positive Ranks	9	8,17	73,50		
	Ties	9				
	Total	24				
7.	Negative Ranks	8	7,75	62,00	-.607	.544
	Positive Ranks	6	7,17	43,00		
	Ties	10				
	Total	24				
8.	Negative Ranks	9	8,00	72,00	-.220	.826
	Positive Ranks	8	10,13	81,00		
	Ties	7				
	Total	24				

Table 4.5. (Continue)

9.	Negative Ranks	8	8,69	69,50	-.337	.736
	Positive Ranks	9	9,28	83,50		
	Ties	7				
	Total	24				
10.	Negative Ranks	7	8,57	60,00	-.423	.672
	Positive Ranks	9	8,44	76,00		
	Ties	8				
	Total	24				
11.	Negative Ranks	8	6,25	50,00	-.582	.560
	Positive Ranks	7	10,00	70,00		
	Ties	9				
	Total	24				
12.	Negative Ranks	7	6,79	47,50	-.322	.747
	Positive Ranks	7	8,21	57,50		
	Ties	10				
	Total	24				
13.	Negative Ranks	8	10.75	86,00	-.733	.463
	Positive Ranks	12	10.33	124,00		
	Ties	4				
	Total	24				
14.	Negative Ranks	10	8.30	83.00	-.498	.618
	Positive Ranks	9	11.89	107.00		
	Ties	5				
	Total	24				
15.	Negative Ranks	7	9,71	68,00	-.409	.682
	Positive Ranks	10	8,50	85,00		
	Ties	7				
	Total	24				
16.	Negative Ranks	7	10,86	76,00	-.796	.426
	Positive Ranks	12	9,50	114,00		
	Ties	5				
	Total	24				
17.	Negative Ranks	8	8.50	68.00	-1.121	.262
	Positive Ranks	11	11.09	122.00		
	Ties	5				
	Total	24				
18.	Negative Ranks	8	8.50	68.00	-.952	.341
	Positive Ranks	11	11.09	122.00		
	Ties	5				
	Total	24				

The overall analysis of the items in the questionnaire administered to the control group indicates that reading comprehension ability of the students does not display a

significant progress. There is not a statistically significant increase between pre and post administration of the questionnaire.

Table 4.6 below demonstrates the data obtained from the pre and post questionnaire administered to the experimental group.

Table 4.6. Pre- and post questionnaire of the experimental group

PRE-POST		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	P (Two-Tailed)
1.	Negative Ranks	2	6.00	12.00	-3.014	.003
	Positive Ranks	14	8.86	124.00		
	Ties	10				
	Total	26				
2.	Negative Ranks	3	7.50	22.50	-2.737	.006
	Positive Ranks	14	9.32	130.50		
	Ties	9				
	Total	26				
3.	Negative Ranks	3	3.50	10.50	-3.699	.000
	Positive Ranks	18	12.25	220.50		
	Ties	5				
	Total	26				
4.	Negative Ranks	5	5.50	27.50	-2.772	.006
	Positive Ranks	14	11.61	162.50		
	Ties	7				
	Total	26				
5.	Negative Ranks	2	4.50	9.00	-3.551	.000
	Positive Ranks	17	10.65	181.00		
	Ties	7				
	Total	26				
6.	Negative Ranks	0	.00	.00	-4.256	.000
	Positive Ranks	23	12.00	276.00		
	Ties	3				
	Total	26				
7.	Negative Ranks	3	5.00	15.00	-2.814	.005
	Positive Ranks	13	9.31	121.00		
	Ties	10				
	Total	26				
8.	Negative Ranks	1	5.50	5.50	-2.949	.003
	Positive Ranks	12	7.13	85.50		
	Ties	13				
	Total	26				
9.	Negative Ranks	3	5.00	15.00	-4.112	.000
	Positive Ranks	23	14.61	336.00		
	Ties	0				
	Total	26				

Table 4.6. (Continue)

10.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	3 17 6 26	5.00 11.47	15.00 195.00	-3.412	.001
11.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	0 23 3 26	.00 12.00	.00 276.00	-4.280	.000
12.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	1 19 6 26	4.50 10.82	4.50 205.50	-3.822	.000
13.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	1 22 3 26	5.00 12.32	5.00 271.00	-4.092	.000
14.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	2 15 9 26	5.00 9.53	10.00 143.00	-3.213	.001
15.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	3 18 5 26	6.00 11.83	18.00 213.00	-3.459	.001
16.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	11 22 3 26	5.50 12.30	5.50 270.50	-4.101	.000
17.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	1 5 10 26	4.00 8.80	4.00 132.00	-3.361	.001
18.	Negative Ranks Positive Ranks Ties Total	3 15 8 26	5.00 10.40	15.00 156.00	-3.130	.002

4.2.2.1. Questionnaire Items and Reading Skills

4.2.2.1.1. Item 1: Recognizing Headings and Subheadings

This item aims to find out if the participants could recognize headings and subheadings. If this item is checked for the participants in the experimental group, the values are ($z = -3.014$ and $p = .003$). That is to say, a meaningful change occurred between the pre and post questionnaire. In order to support this data, the interview question was analyzed.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 1

T: Do the headings and subheadings of a text affect your understanding?

S1: I mean it does. It is a theme I like, for example, I read it. There are books of which I looked at the titles and decided not to read them.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 2

T: Do the headings and subheadings of a text affect your understanding?

S1: Yes. They affect the level of understanding most of the time. I check the title and think about it before reading.

The participant gave a general response to the question in the first interview. In the second interview, the participant stated that he activated the schemata before reading which facilitated the comprehension process. Below is an excerpt from another participant:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 3

T: Do the headings and subheadings of a text affect your understanding?

S3: In general, it does. The titles usually explain what the subject is. At least, we get an idea of what the subject is. (The participant stated that headings and subheadings facilitate the comprehension process by activating the prior knowledge.)

4.2.2.1.2. Item 2: Transcoding Information to Diagrammatic Display

Item 2 aimed to find out whether the participants could set up a relationship between pictures / illustrations and their background knowledge. If we check this item for the experimental group, it can be seen that $p = .006$. That is to say, we can consider a significant difference between the administrations. This can be checked by the responses below.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 4

T: Do the pictures or illustrations help you understand a text?

S1: Maybe, I am not sure. If I am reading a newspaper column, it can help me.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 5

T: Do the pictures or illustrations help you understand a text?

S1: I mean, sometimes. I like books with pictures. They are easier to read.

The participants' response in the second interview above indicates that pictures and illustrations facilitate the process of reading. Below is an excerpt from another participant:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 6

T: Do the pictures or illustrations help you understand a text?

S4: Teacher, I think they are necessary to understand a text. Before I read a text, I look at the pictures and think about the subject. Then, I read the text to check if my guesses are right. (The participant noted that pictures make her think about the content of the text.)

4.2.2.1.3. Item 3 & 14: Recognizing the Role of Background Knowledge

Items 3 and 14 aimed to find out whether the participants could recognize the effect of background knowledge on comprehending texts. If these items are checked for the experimental group, it can be seen that z value is -3.699 and p value is .000 for item 3 and z value is -3.213 and p value is .001. Thus, we can say that a significant difference occurred between the administrations. This can be observed in the following excerpts below.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 7

T: Does your background knowledge affect your understanding a text?

S1: I mean it does. There can be words related to it. It affects positively. It makes the text easier to understand.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 8

T: Does your background knowledge affect your understanding a text?

S1: It does if I know something about the subject beforehand.

In both interviews, the participant responded in a way that he recognized the role of background knowledge, or schemata, affect the level of understanding a text. Here is an excerpt from another participant:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 9

T: Does your background knowledge affect your understanding a text?

S7: Of course, it makes the text easier to understand. I make comparisons to check whether what we know is true or not. (The participant stated that activating schemata facilitated the reading process.)

4.2.2.1.4. Item 4: Scanning to Locate Specifically Required Information

As mentioned earlier by the researcher, this is a microskill stated by Alderson (2000). Item 4 aimed to find out whether the participants could scan a text to figure out a specific detail. When the results of the experimental group are considered, it can be seen that z value is -2.772 and p value is .006 for item 4. Thus, we can consider a significant difference between the two administrations. This can be seen in the following excerpts.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 10

T: Do you try to get the main ideas quickly or figure out the specific details in a text?

S1: I try to get the details first.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 11

T: Do you try to get the main ideas quickly or figure out the specific details in a text?

S1: Teacher, it depends. Sometimes, I search the main idea, sometimes I look for the specific details.

As seen above, the participant seems to be aware of using skimming and scanning when required. Here is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 12

T: Do you try to get the main ideas quickly or figure out the specific details in a text?

S3: I do both of them. If it is necessary, I search the details, too. I think they are both important to understand what we read. (As revealed by the data from the questionnaire, the participant noted that both skimming and scanning are necessary for comprehension.)

4.2.2.1.5. Item 5: Recognizing Enumerations

The aim of item 5 is to find out whether the participants could recognize the enumerations in a text. If we check the results of the experimental group, z value is -3.551 and p value is .000. Therefore, we can say that a significant difference occurred between the administrations. This can be observed in the parts of the interviews below:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 13

T: Do you think the enumerators such as first, second, third are necessary to understand a text?

S1: I think it depends on the type of the text. For example, if it is about a process or an event, they are necessary.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 14

T: Do you think the enumerators such as first, second, third are necessary to understand a text?

S1: Yes, they are necessary, because they add meaning to the texts. I can understand the events more easily.

As stated above, the participant does know about the enumerators and the reason of using them in texts. The participant also knows that enumerators add meaning to the text and help with comprehension. Below is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 15

T: Do you think the enumerators such as first, second, third are necessary to understand a text?

S2: I think they are necessary to understand facts. They connect the sentences to each other, so we can understand what will come next. (The participant stated that enumerators are necessary to find out what comes next in a text.)

4.2.2.1.6. Item 6: Recognizing Main Ideas in Paragraphs and Short Selections

The aim of item 6 is to find out whether the participants could recognize and find the main and supporting ideas in paragraphs and short selections. If the results of the experimental group are considered, it can be noticed that z value is -4.256 and p value is .000. Thus, it can be said that a significant difference occurred between the administrations. Below are some parts from the interviews:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 16

T: Can you find out the main and supporting ideas in a text you read?

S5: Generally, I can find them out.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 17

T: Can you find out the main and supporting ideas in a text you read?

S4: I can find them out. The main idea is important. If you do not understand it, you read in vain.

As seen from the parts above, the participant emphasized the importance of the main ideas and their functions in the texts in the second interview. In the first interview, he did not give the expected response. Below is an excerpt from the second interview:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 18

T: Can you find out the main and supporting ideas in a text you read?

S8: I can usually find them. If I can't, it means that I did not read it in the right way. The main idea is more important than the writer's purpose. (As can be seen from the data of the questionnaires, the participant stated that finding the main idea is important to comprehend a text.)

4.2.2.1.7. Item 7: Recognizing Signal Words

Item 7 aimed to find out if the participants could recognize the signal words such as “also, otherwise, in addition, on the contrary” in reading texts. If the results for the experimental group are considered, we see that z value is -2.814 and p value is .005. Therefore, a significant difference occurred between the two administrations. The following are parts from the interviews.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 19

T: Can you figure out what will come next in the text?

S2: If the text is familiar to me, I make guesses. If it is not, it is hard to make guesses. But, anyway, I imagine it in my mind as pre-information.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 20

T: Can you figure out what will come next in the text?

S2: In general, I do.

T: How?

S2: The sentences may be connected to each other with conjunctions. If the writer uses ‘but’ for example, I can understand that the information will contrast with the previous one.

In the parts of interviews above, the participant stated that she made guesses to figure out what will come next in a text. However, in the second interview, she stated that she noticed the conjunctions in the text and this helped her comprehend the text better. Here is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 21

T: Can you figure out what will come next in the text?

S6: You can guess it. The writer gives the information on what will come next in the first paragraph. In addition, the paragraphs are connected to each other. (The participant revealed that the sequence of the paragraphs can reveal the upcoming information.)

4.2.2.1.8. Items 8 & 10: Recognizing Definitions and Examples

The aim of items 8 and 10 was to determine whether the participants could recognize the definitions and examples in texts. When looked at the results of the experimental group, it is seen that z value is -2.949 and p value is .003 for item 8 and z value is -3.412 and p value is .001 for item 10. Therefore, a significant difference exists between the administrations of the questionnaires. Below are some parts from the interviews:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 22

T: Do the definitions and examples help you understand a text?

S5: Teacher, I can not understand the text if there are too many definitions and examples. This sometimes happens in the exams. I do not get a good mark, then.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 23

T: Do the definitions and examples help you understand a text?

S5: If there are new words in a text, there can be definitions, too. I read the sentences carefully to find definitions and examples. They are usually found within the sentences.

As seen in the parts of the interviews above, the participant revealed that she could not understand a text with too many definitions and examples. In the second interview, she stated that she knew how to find definitions and examples in sentences. Another excerpt from the second interview can be seen below:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 24

T: Do the definitions and examples help you understand a text?

S1: Teacher, when I see unknown words, I try not to look up the dictionary. If there are definitions and examples, I can understand the text more easily. (Similar data gathered from the questionnaire, the participant said that definitions and examples help her understand texts better.)

4.2.2.1.9. Item 9: Recognizing the Contextual Clues for Vocabulary

Item 9 aimed to determine whether the participants could recognize the contextual clues for vocabulary in texts such as synonyms and antonyms. When looked at the results of the experimental group, it is seen that z value is -4.112 and p value is .000. That is to say, a significant difference occurred between the pre and post administrations. We can support the data with the parts of the interviews below:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 25

T: Can you find the meanings of unknown words in texts?

S4: It is difficult to understand a text if I do not know the meaning of unknown words, but I make guesses.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 26

T: Can you find the meanings of unknown words in texts?

S4: Yes, I do; especially in the exams.

T: How?

S4: I read the text and try to find synonyms, antonyms or examples for the unknown words. It usually works.

As seen above, the participant made guesses at first, but he looked for clues in the text as stated in the second interview. Here is an excerpt from the second interview:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 27

T: Can you find the meanings of unknown words in texts?

S2: Most of the time, I can.

T: How?

S2: I check why and how it is used in the paragraph. I also check how it is related to other words in the paragraph. I try to make connotations. (The participant said that he could use the contextual clues to figure out the meanings of unknown words.)

4.2.2.1.10. Item 11: Recognizing Arguments

The aim of item 11 is to find out whether the participants could recognize the arguments in reading texts. When looked at the results of the experimental group, it is seen that z value is -4.280 and p value is .000. Thus, a statistically significant difference occurred between the administrations. The following are parts of the interviews:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 28

T: Can you understand the writer's arguments while reading a text?

S6: Sometimes. Most of the time, I do not.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 29

T: Can you understand the writer's arguments while reading a text?

S6: Yes. I mean it is important to understand why the writer wrote that way and what his purpose is.

The participant previously stated that he did not try to understand the writer's arguments. In the second interview, he stated that it was important to understand the arguments so as to understand the text. Here is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 30

T: Can you understand the writer's arguments while reading a text?

S1: Yes, I can understand them. Sometimes I even write comments on these arguments. Every piece of writing gives arguments of the writer. (The participant stated that she could identify arguments in the text.)

4.2.2.1.11. Item 12: Recognizing the Organization of the Text

Item 12 aimed to determine if the participants could recognize the organization of a text. When checked the results of the experimental group, it is noticed that z value is -3.822 and p value is .000. That is to say, a statistically significant difference occurred between the two administrations. The following are some parts of the interviews.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 31

T: Does the organization of the text affect your understanding of the text?

S3: No. The content of the text, rather than the organization is important to me.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 32

T: Does the organization of the text affect your understanding of the text?

S3: Yes, the organization is important and it affects comprehension. The sentences must follow an order.

Here, the participant stated that the content was more important to him in the first interview. In the second interview, he said that the sentences must be in order and this affects comprehension. Below is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 33

T: Does the organization of the text affect your understanding of the text?

S9: Yes. The paragraphs must be written in order: introduction, body and conclusion. They mustn't be disconnected. There must be organization to connect the paragraphs. I organize the paragraphs when I write a composition. (Similar to the data gathered from the questionnaire, the participant said that texts must follow an order of organization.)

4.2.2.1.12. Items 13 & 16: Evaluating the Texts

Items 13 and 16 aimed to find out whether the participants could evaluate the texts. When we look at the results of the experimental group, it is noticed that z value is -4.092 and p value is .000 for item 13 and z value is -4.101 and p value is .000 for item 16. Below are some parts from the first and second interview.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 34

T: Can you analyze and evaluate the text you read?

S10: Yes, I mean, if the subject is interesting to me, I can.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 35

T: Can you analyze and evaluate the text you read?

S10: I can. It is important, because it helps me understand the text and notice the important ideas in the text.

As can be seen above, the participant said that she could analyze and evaluate the text if the subject was interesting to her. In the second interview, she stated that analyzing the text means understanding the gist and the important ideas in the text. Here is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 36

T: Can you analyze and evaluate the text you read?

S4: Analysis is important. I read the text and analyze it. Then, I discuss it with my friends to see how they analyze and evaluate the text. I make a comparison. (The participant stated that discussing the text with other people is a way of analyzing it.)

4.2.2.1.13. Item 15: Recognizing the Genre of the Text

The aim of item 15 was to find out whether the participants could recognize the genre of the texts. If we check the results of the experimental group, it is seen that z value is -3.459 and p value is .001. Thus, there is a significant difference between the first and

second administration of the questionnaires. Some parts of the interviews supporting the data are as follows:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 37

T: Does the genre of a text affect your understanding?

S8: Teacher, it depends on the subject and the style of the writer.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 38

T: Does the genre of a text affect your understanding?

S8: I can figure out the genre. It can be easily understood through the use of certain key words. It says "Once upon a time...", for example and it uses past tense.

The participant stated that the subject and the style affected the comprehension. In the second interview, she stated that she paid attention to the genre and she did this through certain words and tense use in the text. Below another excerpt can be seen:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 39

T: Does the genre of a text affect your understanding?

S3: I understand the genre by means of the writer's style. I have read many different texts with different genres so far. When I start reading, the genre does not matter. (The participant said that the type of the text is not essential to comprehend it.)

4.2.2.1.14. Item 17: Recognizing the Aim of the Author

Item 17 aimed to find out whether the participants could recognize the aim of the author. If the results of the experimental group are checked, it is seen that z value is -3.361 and p value is .001. Therefore, a statistically significant difference occurred between the two administrations. The parts of the interviews are as follows.

From the first interview:

Excerpt 40

T: Can you find out the writer's aim while reading a text?

S7: Well, I read the text and compare it to my own beliefs.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 41

T: Can you find out the writer's aim while reading a text?

S7: Sure, teacher. Each piece of writing has an aim for the reader. It gives a message to the reader.

The participant stated that the writer has an aim in each piece of writing in the second interview, unlike the first interview. Here is another excerpt:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 42

T: Can you find out the writer's aim while reading a text?

S9: I can, teacher. I do that by recalling my prior knowledge and making an analysis of the text by rereading it. (Similar to questionnaire responses, the participant said that the writer's aim is related to the reader's prior knowledge.)

4.2.2.1.15. Item 18: Understanding Information When not Explicitly Stated

The aim of item 18 was to determine if the participants could understand the information that is not explicitly stated. When the results of the experimental group are checked, it is seen that z value is -3.130 and p value is .002. In other words, it can be said that a significant difference occurred between the administrations. The following are parts of the interviews:

From the first interview:

Excerpt 43

T: Do you understand the information in a text that is not stated explicitly?

S9: I sometimes understand them.

From the second interview:

Excerpt 44

T: Do you understand the information in a text that is not stated explicitly?

S9: I understand them and I think they embellish the text. Irony, for example; it is very interesting. It makes us think in both ways.

In the second interview, the participant stated that she was aware of figurative language and she could understand the text which uses one of these devices. Below is another excerpt from the second interview:

From the second interview:

Excerpt 45

T: Do you understand the information in a text that is not stated explicitly?

S7: Teacher, the metaphors and word devices create a work of art. I especially like metaphors a lot. There are plenty of them in Shakespeare's works, for example. (The participant said that he was aware of language devices and could understand them.)

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter of the study presents the conclusions, discussion and the implications which were drawn from the data gathered by means of Reading Skills Questionnaire, pre-test and post-test, and interviews.

5.1. Conclusions and Discussions

The aim of this case study was twofold; (1) to find out whether Turkish EFL students were aware of reading skills and (2) whether or not they could use appropriate reading skills if they could gain them through a training programme. As mentioned in the second chapter of the study, the term “reading skills” includes a variety of skills, which can also be named as “strategies”. For this reason, a number of reading skills were chosen among the other skills (see Chapter 4). The lesson plans were prepared according to the curriculum of the Department of Foreign Languages at KSU. Four instruments were employed in order to collect data: pre-test and post-test, Reading Skills Questionnaire, and interview.

The first research question of this study seeks answers to whether the students are aware of the reading skills or not. The results of The Reading Skills Questionnaire analysis which consists of 18 items were computed in order to find out whether the participants were aware of the reading skills. The questionnaire was conducted at the beginning of the study and it was the first instrument used to collect data for this study to find answers to the first research question. The questionnaire contained 12 reading skills and 3 micro skills and it was also conducted at the end of the study.

The analysis of the data showed that there exists a significant difference between the pre- and post- administrations of the questionnaire in all of the items. Thus, we can conclude that the students were not aware of the reading skills at the beginning of the study. The data gathered from the questionnaire were supported by the interviews and reveal a positive change in awareness of the reading skills.

In other words, there has been a change in using the reading skills and this can be seen in the pre-test and post-test grades of the participants. When the results of these tests are considered, it is noticed that there has been a remarkable increase in the post-test results of the experimental group. Thus, being aware of the reading skills and using them efficiently helped the students enhance the comprehension ability and achieve good results in the post-test.

The second research question of this study aims to find out whether the students can be trained in terms of reading skills. According to Bedir (2000), students should be taught how to use and maintain the appropriate strategies for comprehension to occur. Thus, instruction in learning helps students produce strategies.

As was mentioned in the third chapter of this study, a definite number of reading skills (or strategies as they are named by some researchers), does not exist. Nor do we have a definite explanation of what reading skills are and how they should be taught, as noted by Casanave (1988). However, having selected the reading skills and micro skills that we thought would help them enhance their comprehension ability; we prepared the training programme for the students. The training programme mainly focused on the fact that the students should realize that they do not only need vocabulary and grammar in order to comprehend what they read.

The data obtained from the pre-and post-test, Reading Skills Questionnaire, and interviews have shown that the students can be trained in terms of reading skills. Before the training, the students used to complain about inadequate comprehension of reading texts in the quizzes and exams. Having been equipped with the reading skills and achieving proficiency, they have shown that they enhanced their reading comprehension ability.

The third research question of this study seeks an answer to the question whether the students who are trained on reading skills are better at reading comprehension than those who are not. Bedir (2000) states that readers who do not possess the knowledge of the skills are more likely to fail when they read a text. Some other researchers such as Carrell et al.(1989) and Nuttall (1996) also share this view. They mention that less competent readers can improve by means of training in strategies that are displayed by more successful readers. Therefore, it is evident that strategy training helps.

Similarly, Pani (2004) says that students need training in terms of strategies so that they would become competent readers. According to Istifci (2009), the students understand more if they participate actively in the reading lesson by applying strategies. In addition, Auerbach and Paxton (1997) note that the students unable to name any strategies at all have the greatest difficulty with comprehension. The researchers mentioned above all emphasize the importance of the training the students on reading skills / strategies in order that they would enhance their comprehension ability.

When the overall analysis of the data is considered, it is seen that the students who are trained on reading skills are better at reading comprehension than those who are not. For instance, many of them were lacking the reading skill required to find the main idea and supporting ideas in a text, but, in the end they gained the skill and accomplished the tasks. They realized that they did not have to decode every single word in a text in order to comprehend it.

Moreover, the data gathered through the interviews revealed that students started to feel more confident towards the end of the study. There was a meaningful change in the participants' attitudes towards reading comprehension. Being aware of the reading skills and knowing how to use them efficiently while dealing with texts, the participants seemed to be more comfortable with the tests at the end of the study.

There exists a relationship between the language skills. A well written text can be a good model for the students, for example. It can help the students to improve their writing skills. That is to say, reading and writing are related to each other. Similarly, reading and listening are related to each other. Zamel (1992) notes that reading and writing are complementary acts. Students must become better at reading to become better at writing. As suggested by Nuttall (1996), the other language skills are needed to provide variety in a reading class (for instance listening to a text while it is being read aloud).

To conclude, when the research questions of this study are considered, we reached a number of results. Firstly, we realized that the students were not aware of the reading skills. Secondly, we understood that the students could be trained in terms of reading skills and the training could enhance their comprehension ability. In addition the trained students (experimental group) outperformed the other group (control group). Finally, we realized

that reading skills have positive effects on writing skills. Briefly, this study reveals that if the students are trained to gain the appropriate strategies which facilitate understanding, they are likely to be successful in reading comprehension. Thus, reading comprehension can be facilitated by enabling students to gain and use reading skills.

5.2. Implications for ELT and Suggestions for Further Research

This study was conducted with preparatory year students in order to find out whether or not a meaningful change occurred in their reading comprehension ability. The results indicated that the participants seemed to use certain reading skills while tackling the texts being read. A similar study was conducted by Akünel (1988), which revealed that the participants could learn the reading skills through Natural Approach.

The data also indicated that the students were unaware of the reading skills and this prevented them from comprehending the texts, as displayed by their marks in reading sections of the previous exams. Reading is an important language skill which is inevitably influenced by the schema theory and constructivism. In other words, students should activate their background knowledge and build on this knowledge by themselves. The students should actively participate in the process of constructing knowledge, as suggested by Şen (2000). Therefore, it is the teachers' and instructors' responsibility to design reading classes and implement the dispositions suggested by the philosophies of reading such as constructivism.

Semantic mapping is one way of helping students to activate background knowledge. Thus, students become more interested in reading (see Appendix 10). KWL chart can also be used in reading classes. It also activates the students' schemata before reading. Some teachers tend to skip pre reading activities in reading classes, as noted by Alyousef (2005). We should not ignore pre- and post reading in our classes. We should not think that pre-reading stage is a loss of time. Furthermore, post reading stage is of vital importance since it helps the students retain what is learned. EFL teachers should not underestimate the benefits of applying the reading stages, particularly pre-reading.

In addition, it has been observed that training the students in terms of reading skills affected their writing skills positively. It is a major problem that the students do not

comprehend what they read in their first language and English. This problem seems to emerge in various grades in schools. For this reason, students should be trained prior to their education at university.

Unless we can organize a regular programme or inform the students about efficient reading and give them the opportunity to practise the strategies, as noted by Nuttall (1996), we cannot expect them to develop their comprehension ability. In addition, we must choose suitable materials, clarify the reading purpose and integrate the skills or strategies into our courses. Strategic learning and teaching have become important in education.

In light of these statements, we can emphasize skills teaching in our classes. Students can be directed to use the necessary skills in reading. Most students use a few skills and this results in inadequate understanding and poor marks. Therefore, there must be some changes in teaching reading. Students should be trained so that they can approach reading skillfully. They should be trained in order to be aware of the fact that they do not only need vocabulary and knowledge of grammar or sentence structure to comprehend the texts. Bedir (1998) mentions that we should direct the students to read externally to improve their background knowledge. Reading leads to the acquisition of knowledge and storing them in the long-term memory.

Nevertheless, efficient reading cannot be developed in a short period of time. According to Nuttall (1996), if there is not sufficient time to reach the ultimate goals, we must help students to develop coping strategies (or ways of tackling texts). Afterwards, the students can continue to improve their reading on their own. In other words, we must equip them for this. Bedir (1998) states that it is not obligatory for the students to have a good knowledge of the target language to use the strategies.

This study was conducted during one semester. A further study can last longer; an academic year, for instance. Reading skills are not easy to learn in a short period of time. It may take several years for EFL students to become strategic readers. A further research can be conducted on the effect of gender or age on reading skills or whether the reading skills can be transferred to other language skills.

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APPENDIX 1

READING SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE

Name & Surname:

Class:

Before Reading:	Always	Usually	Often	Rarely	Never
1. I try to guess what the text is about by looking at the title.	()	()	()	()	()
2. I try to guess what the text is about by looking at the pictures or illustrations.	()	()	()	()	()
3. I try to remember what I know about the text.	()	()	()	()	()
During Reading:					
4. I read every word of a text.	()	()	()	()	()
5. I recognize the sequence of events in a text.	()	()	()	()	()
6. I can find supporting ideas and the main idea of the text.	()	()	()	()	()
7. Signal words would improve reading comprehension in English.	()	()	()	()	()
8. The best way to improve my reading in English is by learning as much new vocabulary as possible.	()	()	()	()	()
9. I can't understand a paragraph if it has several new words in it.	()	()	()	()	()
10. If I don't know the meaning of a word in English, I look it up in the dictionary.	()	()	()	()	()
11. I can anticipate the writer's arguments in the text.	()	()	()	()	()
12. I can relate information which comes next in the text to previous information in the text.	()	()	()	()	()
13. I can question the significance or truthfulness of what the author says.	()	()	()	()	()

14. I can use my prior knowledge and experience to understand the content of the text I am reading. () () () () ()

15. I can find out the type of text I am reading. () () () () ()

After Reading:

16. I can evaluate and criticize the text. () () () () ()

17. I can find out why the text was written. () () () () ()

18. I can understand the information if it is stated explicitly. () () () () ()

OKUMA BECERİLERİ ANKETİ

Ad & Soyad:

Sınıf:

Okuma Öncesinde:

	Her zaman	Genellikle	Sıklıkla	Nadiren	Hiçbir zaman
1. Başlığa bakarak metnin konusunu tahmin etmeye çalışırım.	()	()	()	()	()
2. Resim veya ilüstrasyonlara bakarak metnin konusunu tahmin etmeye çalışırım.	()	()	()	()	()
3. Metin hakkında bildiklerimi hatırlamaya çalışırım.	()	()	()	()	()

Okuma Sırasında:

4. Metnin her kelimesini okurum.	()	()	()	()	()
5. Metindeki olayların sırasını farkedirim.	()	()	()	()	()
6. Metindeki ana fikri ve onu destekleyen fikirleri bulabilirim.	()	()	()	()	()
7. Uyarıcı kelimeler, İngilizce anlamamı iyileştirir.	()	()	()	()	()
8. İngilizce okumamı geliştirmemin en iyi yolu, mümkün olduğunca çok kelime öğrenmektir.	()	()	()	()	()
9. Bir paragrafta bilmediğim birkaç kelime varsa, onu anlayamam.	()	()	()	()	()
10. İngilizce anlamını bilmediğim bir kelime varsa, sözlüğe bakarım.	()	()	()	()	()
11. Yazarın metinde tartıştığı konuları anlayabilirim.	()	()	()	()	()
12. Metinde, sonraki bilgiyle önceki bilgileri ilişkilendirebilirim.	()	()	()	()	()
13. Yazılanların doğruluğunu veya gerçekliğini sorgulayabilirim.	()	()	()	()	()

14. Önceki bilgi ve deneyimlerimi okuduğum metnin içeriğini anlamak için kullanabilirim. () () () () ()

15. Okuduğum metnin türünü bulabilirim. () () () () ()

Okuma Sonrasında:

16. Metni değerlendirip eleştirebilirim. () () () () ()

17. Metnin neden yazıldığını bulabilirim. () () () () ()

18. Açıkça belirtilmeyen bilgiyi anlayabilirim. () () () () ()

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What material do you read most often in your daily life?
2. Can you analyze and evaluate the text you read?
3. Can you find out the main and supporting ideas in the text?
4. Do the definitions and examples help you understand the text? If yes, how?
5. Can you find out the meanings of unknown words in the text? If yes, how?
6. Can you understand the writer's arguments while reading the text?
7. Can you understand the writer's aim while reading the text?
8. While reading, do you try to get the main idea quickly or figure out the specific details in the text?
9. Do you understand the information in a text that is not stated explicitly?
10. Does the organization of a text affect your understanding? If yes, how?
11. Can you make an outline of the text you read?
12. Does the genre of a text affect your understanding?
13. Do the headings and subheadings affect your understanding the text?
14. Can you figure out what will come next in the text? If yes, how?
15. Does your background knowledge affect your understanding the text?
16. Do the pictures and illustrations help you understand a text?
17. Do you think the enumerators such as "first, second, third" are necessary to understand a text?

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. Günlük hayatta en sık hangi materyali okursun?
2. Okuduğun materyali analiz edip değerlendirebilir misin?
3. Metindeki ana fikri ev onu destekleyen fikirleri bulabilir misin?
4. Tanımlar ve örnekler metni anlamana yardım eder mi? Cevabın evetse, nasıl?
5. Metinde bilinmeyen kelimelerin anlamlarını bulabilir misin? Cevabın evetse, nasıl?
6. Metni okurken yazarın kanıtlarını anlayabilir misin?
7. Metni okurken yazarın amacını anlayabilir misin?
8. Okuma esnasında, ana fikri çabuk bir şekilde mi anlamaya çalışırsın, belirli detayları mı?
9. Metinde açıkça belirtilmeyen bilgiyi anlar mısın?
10. Metnin düzeni anlamayı etkiler mi? Cevabın evetse, nasıl?
11. Okuduğun metnin taslağını yapabilir misin?
12. Metnin türü anlamayı etkiler mi?
13. Ana ve alt başlıklar metni anlamayı etkiler mi?
14. Metinde sonra gelecek olan bilgiyi çıkarabilir misin? Cevabın evetse, nasıl?
15. Geçmiş bilgilerin metni anlamayı etkiler mi?
16. Resim ve illüstrasyonlar metni anlamana yardımcı olur mu?
17. Sence “birinci, ikinci, üçüncü” gibi sayı sıfatları, metni anlamak için gerekli midir

APPENDIX 3

LESSON PLAN SAMPLE

Aims: To make and check predictions about a text
 Scanning
 Guessing the meaning of a word from the context

Pre-Reading Stage: The teacher greets the class and states the aim of the lesson. She writes “workaholic” on the board and asks “what are the characteristics of workaholic people?” Sts. discuss the question in pairs. (They activate their schemata). The teacher hands out the sheets. Sts. read Part A.

Sts. make their own predictions at this stage. 1, 3 and 5 will be checked in the next stage.

During-Reading Stage: Sts. do the second part at this stage (part B). The sts. read the text and check their predictions. (Time limit is 5-7 minutes.) The teacher does not answer the questions related to vocabulary, because the students are expected to guess the unknown vocabulary from the context.

After-Reading Stage: Sts. do the third part at this stage (part C). The sts. answer the questions individually. The teacher checks the answers. Next, sts. do Part D individually. The teacher gives more time to answer the questions. The teacher checks the answers with the students.

Next, the teacher writes “The first time I saw Diana I was mesmerized by her beauty.” on the board and asks the students if the underlined word has a positive or negative meaning. The sts. give reasons. The teacher gives feedback and tells sts. that sometimes it is not necessary to know the exact meaning of a word to understand a text. It is often enough to know whether a word has a positive or negative meaning. The sts. do the next step in pairs. The teacher checks the answers and gives feedback.

A. Check the information you think you will read about in the text

1. What it means to be a workaholic
2. How an addiction to work is different from an addiction to food
3. How hard work is different from compulsive work
4. Why some people become workaholics
5. What workaholics can do about their problem

B. Read the text quickly to check your predictions.**ARE YOU A WORKAHOLIC?**

- 1 Do you think about work all the time? Do you work long hours, far beyond the requirements of the job? Are you anxious when you are not at work?
- 2 If you answered “yes,” then you might be a workaholic, a person who is compulsively addicted to work.
- 3 How can that be, addicted to work? In truth, you can abuse anything – food, exercise. Work addiction is just one more form of compulsive behaviour. It keeps us constantly busy and stops us from looking inside ourselves. “Like other addictions, you are seeking a way of not having to look at or feel things or just to self-medicate to take care of pain, anxiety, or feelings,” says Janet Salyer, a professional counsellor. “Workaholics put the job before family, friends, and their own health. Even if they’re spending time with their families, their mind is on work.”
- 4 Take note: There is a difference between hard work and compulsive work. Hard work enriches your life even if it includes some periods of long hours and extra work. People who live in Europe are more likely to be workaholic than people in other parts of the world.
- 5 But we live in a society that rewards compulsive work, and we get applauded for keeping long hours and taking on more and more responsibilities. Being called a workaholic is often not taken as an insult.
- 6 “Our society in some ways reinforces and rewards workaholism. Sometimes it is subtle, but there is a lot of recognition given to people for being extremely busy. It is almost like equating someone’s value with how busy they are,” Salyer says.
- 7 A client of Salyer’s said her co-workers often came in on Monday mornings and talked about how many hours they had worked during the weekend. The people who didn’t work on Saturday or Sunday were viewed as less interested in their jobs.
- 8 “Some organizations reinforce overwork,” she says. “Learn to relax and not neglect your private life.”

C. Answer the questions (True or False).

According to the author ...

1. if you work more than you need to and always think about work, then you might be a workaholic.
2. addiction to work helps us looking inside ourselves.
3. if you call a person a “workaholic”, he/she takes it as an insult.
4. for workaholics their job is much more important than their family, friends and their own health.

D. Read the text again carefully and find the answers to the questions.

1. What are the characteristics of a workaholic?
2. How is an addiction to work similar to an addiction to food?
3. How are hard work and compulsive work different?
4. How does American society help create workaholics?
5. How is an addiction to work different from other addictions?
6. What do some people think of workers who don't work long hours?

E. Find the words below in the text. Do they have a positive or negative meaning?

Complete the chart.

abuse	overwork
enriches	rewards
recognition	anxious
applauded	value
pain	insult

positive	negative

APPENDIX 4

A PRE-READING ACTIVITY

The teacher greets the class and states the aim of the lesson (recognizing contextual clues in the text). The teacher asks the students what their favourite stories are and elicits answers (pre-questioning). Next, the sheets are handed out. The students discuss the following questions with a partner and activate their schemata.

1. Do you like to tell stories? What kind of stories do you like to tell?
2. Why do you think people create and tell stories?
3. Did anything ever happen to you that seemed like bad luck, but then turned out to be good luck? Or, did anything ever happen to you that seemed like good luck, but then turned out to be bad luck?

In the next step, the students read the sentences and match the boldfaced words and phrases with the definitions.

- ___ 1. We have new **neighbours**. They just bought the house next door to ours.
- ___ 2. My friend **comforted** me when I broke my arm.
- ___ 3. We saw a **terrible** movie last night. I hated it.
- ___ 4. The painting is a **valuable** piece of art, so be very careful with it.
- ___ 5. Everyone **congratulated** me when I won the contest.
- ___ 6. We were playing tennis when **suddenly** it started to rain.
- ___ 7. He was in a car **accident** on his way to work. Luckily, no one was hurt.
- ___ 8. We had the **misfortune** of being in the airport when the storm hit.
- ___ 9. She **blamed** her cat for breaking the vase.
- ___ 10. The students **complain** when their teacher gives too much homework.

- a. to say or think that someone is responsible for something bad.
- b. to tell someone that you are happy because something good happened to someone.
- c. to say that you are not satisfied or are unhappy about something.
- d. worth a lot of money.
- e. quickly and unexpectedly
- f. something that happens because of bad luck

- g.** to make someone feel better by being kind to him or her.
- h.** someone who lives very near you
- i.** very bad
- j.** a situation in which someone is hurt or something is damaged

Finally, the teacher checks the word meanings with the class.

APPENDIX 5

A DURING-READING ACTIVITY

Aim: Recognizing the organization of a text

After the pre-reading activities, the teacher reads the text out loud and the students follow it silently. The students underline the new words and find what they mean from the context. The students answer the questions at the end of each paragraph. The teacher provides feedback.

What Colour Are You Wearing?

1 Do you like to wear bright colours like yellow and orange? Or, do you like to wear dark colours like black and brown? One of the first things you notice about a person's clothing is the colour. Throughout history people have used colour as symbols. In the past, colours had special meanings. Today the colours of clothes can have meanings, too. Here are some of the ways fashion and colour have connected. Since yellow and orange are easy to notice, let's see what they mean first.

Make a prediction. What do you think the next section will be about?
--

a. dark colours	b. yellow and orange	c. the history of colour
-----------------	----------------------	--------------------------

2 It is easy to notice the colours yellow and orange. Yellow and orange look happy and sunny. In ancient Rome, people wore yellow clothes to weddings. Today, some people wear yellow for safety reasons. For example, many raincoats are bright yellow. People wear yellow raincoats so other people can see them easily in the rain. Like yellow, orange can be used for safety. At night, joggers and hunters in the woods may wear orange clothes.

Was your prediction for paragraph 2 correct? Yes No

Think about your clothes. Do you wear yellow or orange very often? Why or why not?

Make a prediction. What do you think the topic of the next section might be?

- a. kinds of raincoats
- b. the meaning of another colour
- c. jogging and hunting

3 Green is a gentle colour. People who work in hospitals often wear green uniforms because the colour relaxes patients. Green is also the colour of nature. It symbolizes growth. Many years ago in Europe, brides wore green dresses as a symbol of fertility.

Was your prediction for paragraph 3 correct? Yes No

Why do hospital workers wear green uniforms?

APPENDIX 6

A POST-READING ACTIVITY

Aim: Recognizing the aim of the author

Things Happen For a Reason

People often say, “Things happen for a reason.” There is an old Chinese story that parents often tell their children. The story is about a man named Cai who lived long ago. Cai lived in a small village with his only son. He didn’t have much money, but he owned a fine horse. One day, when Cai went to feed the horse, he discovered that it had run away. He looked all over his village, but he couldn’t find the horse. He asked everyone about the horse, but no one had seen it. Now Cai didn’t have a horse. When his neighbours heard the news, they came over to comfort him. “Poor Cai,” they said. “How terrible it is to lose a valuable horse.” But Cai just smiled and said “Who knows what is good luck or bad luck?”

The next day, Cai’s horse came home during the night, but it did not return alone. Another horse was standing next to Cai’s horse. It was a beautiful white horse. Now Cai had two horses. When the neighbours heard this news, they came over to Cai’s house again. This time they wanted to congratulate Cai on his good luck. “How lucky you are,” they said. “Such a beautiful horse has suddenly appeared out of nowhere.” Cai smiled again and said, “Who knows if this is good luck or not?”

A few days later, Cai’s only son had an accident. He was riding the new white horse. When the horse jumped over a large rock, young Cai fell off. The horse was fine, but young Cai broke his leg. The villagers thought this was a terrible misfortune. Again they came to Cai’s house to comfort him. They blamed the white horse for bringing bad luck to Cai’s family. Old Cai, however, did not complain. “Wait and see” was all that he would say.

A week later, a group of soldiers came to the village. They found all the young men and took them to fight in a war. Young Cai was still in bed with a broken leg, so he didn’t have to go into the army. Most of the young men in the village died in the fighting, but young Cai was saved. Finally, the villagers understood the wisdom of old Cai. Sometimes what looks like bad luck may not be so bad. Sometimes misfortune may be a blessing in disguise.

After you have read “Things Happen for a Reason”, complete the exercises below.

A. True or False? Write T (True) or F (False) next to each statement. If a statement is false, rewrite it to make it true.

___ 1. Cai had a fine horse that ran away. _____

___ 2. Young Cai broke his leg. _____

___ 3. Young Cai had to fight in the army. _____

___ 4. Cai’s horse returned with an old gray horse. _____

___ 5. The people in the village finally understood the wisdom of Cai.

B. Choose the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. He was riding his new motorcycle when he had a(n) _____.
a. accident b. neighbour c. congratulated
2. Alice _____ that she had too much work to do.
a. complained b. comforted c. congratulated
3. Many buildings were destroyed in the _____ storm.
a. misfortune b. terrible c. comfort
4. I want to _____ you on your fine work.
a. congratulate b. suddenly c. comfort
5. Our new _____ moved here from Greece.
a. accident b. terrible c. neighbours
6. We were surprised when the little boy _____ started crying.
a. suddenly b. terrible c. blame
7. Her jewelry is very _____.
a. neighbour b. valuable c. accident
8. I had the _____ of being in the elevator when it broke.
a. misfortune b. suddenly c. terrible
9. Don't _____ Mary for making this mess. She wasn't here today.
a. blame b. comfort c. congratulate
10. Please try to _____ the baby. She's crying.
a. blame b. comfort c. congratulate

C. Summarize the aim of the author in one sentence.

APPENDIX 7

PRE-TEST OF THE STUDY

Name & Surname:

Class:

A. Find the main and supporting ideas in the following paragraph and write them below.

A honey bee is a farmer's friend. The bee travels from flower to flower, collecting yellow pollen. While the bee is gathering this raw material for honey, it is also helping plants to form seeds to produce new plants.

1. Main Idea: _____

2. Supporting Ideas: _____

B. Read the following sentences and circle the meanings of the underlined words.

3. To repeat one small job hour after hour is both tedious and boring. The job becomes tiring and uninteresting.

Tedious means

a) bad b) tiring c) strange

4. Most states in the United States are divided into small districts called counties.

A county is a

a) city b) district c) street

C. Read the following text and match headings a–g with paragraphs 1–6. There is one heading you do not need.

a World interest in Esperanto

b Easy to learn – and plenty to read!

c Will it survive or disappear?

d Problems for a language with no home

e What is Esperanto trying to do?

f A school project

g One person's idea

Esperanto

5. _____

The language 'Esperanto' is about 120 years old. It doesn't come from any country. People call it a 'planned' language, because someone created it – a Pole, Dr L. L. Zamenhof.

6. _____

The word 'Esperanto' means 'someone who hopes'. The idea is for Esperanto to be a language for international communication. Everyone learns it as a foreign language, rather than learning a language from one particular country, like French or English.

7. _____

Esperanto isn't a difficult language. The rules are simple, and every word is easy to pronounce and to spell. There are Esperanto textbooks and dictionaries, as well as other books, and translations into Esperanto from other languages. There are 30,000 books in the British Esperanto library.

8. _____

There are other 'planned languages', but Esperanto is the biggest. Many countries have their own Esperanto societies. There are over half a million Esperanto Internet sites, and you can even learn it by email! There are also some very famous Esperanto speakers – for example, six Nobel Prize winners.

9. _____

Sadly, the fact that Esperanto doesn't have its own country or culture also causes some problems. For example, no country uses Esperanto in schools, and no people learn it as their own language. Its speakers come from all over the world, but they also have their own languages.

10. _____

Although Esperanto speakers care very much about its future, it's not always easy to make other people speak it or teach it to their children. The future of Esperanto depends on new people learning it, but at the moment there are only around two million speakers of Esperanto in the world. But more than 700 million speakers of English!

D. Read the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with the signal words or enumerators given.

There are a lot of similarities between donkeys and horses. **11.** _____, they look like each other very much. Donkeys live in the stables like horses do. They only eat herbs. **12.** _____, they are domestic. **13.** _____, we cannot find much difference between them.

(so, in addition, firstly,)

E. Read the following paragraph, find the genre of it and answer the question.

My father was 27 when he died. Over the years, the image I had of him was formed from all the stories I had heard. I was a few months old when he died, and a single photograph of me in his arms is the only hard evidence I have that we ever met. After my father's death, my mother moved back to Louisville, Kentucky, where she had grown up. We lived in a small house with her older sister, Marion, and their mother. This was a time when being a single parent was still considered unusual.

14. The paragraph is

- a)** descriptive **b)** narrative **c)** procedural

15. It is implied in the paragraph that

- a)** The writer misses his/her father.
b) The writer wants to forget his/her father.
c) The writer had a happy childhood.

F. Find the definition of the underlined word in the paragraph below.

16. Many of the water resources are non-renewable, so we must save them. That is, we must use them carefully. There are several ways to do this. We can find and use new resources. We must find new uses for old resources. We mustn't waste the resources. We can try to recycle them. In this way, we can use the same resources over and over again.

Recycle means

- a) use again b) cycle c) waste

G. Reorder the sentences below to make a paragraph.

17. When Maggie arrived at her college, she couldn't find a parking space on campus, so she had to park three blocks away **18.** Maggie hopes tomorrow will be a better day. **19.** Yesterday was a terrible day for Maggie. **20.** Then, she couldn't find her car keys and spent fifteen minutes looking for them. **21.** She woke up late because her alarm clock didn't ring. **22.** The teacher looked angry when Maggie walked into class late. **23.** Finally, on the way home from school, Maggie's car got a flat tire.

The order of the sentences: _____

H. Underline the examples in the paragraphs below.

24. Dancing is important in festivals around the world. In the spring, the people of South America celebrate a holiday called Carnival. For five days, people dance in the streets wearing costumes.

25. What do colours mean? Colours have different meanings in different countries. In the United States, the colour white means goodness, but in China white means death.

GOOD LUCK!

Each correct answer is 4 points.

APPENDIX 8

POST-TEST OF THE STUDY

Name & Surname:

Class:

A. Find the main and supporting ideas in the following paragraph and write them below.

The Dutch painter Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) was one of the most famous artists of all time. He painted 650 oil paintings. In addition, he drew over 2,000 pictures. Rembrandt is best known for his paintings of people who lived in Amsterdam. *The Night Watch* is one of his most popular paintings.

1. Main Idea: _____

2. Supporting Ideas: _____

B. Read the following sentences and circle the meanings of the underlined words.

3. Native Americans developed a variety of different vegetables; corn, squash and potatoes.

a) the same b) a number of different things c) too many

4. Harry looks indignant when he doesn't get what he wants.

a) happy b) angry c) silly

C. Read the following text and match headings a–g with paragraphs 1–5. There is one heading you do not need.

- a Living life through books
- b The hard work of writing
- c Writing about my own life
- d A famous writer?
- e Something better than sport!
- f Unhappy endings

FOR THE LOVE OF BOOKS

5. _____

When I was a child I loved reading, and I read anything I could find. But I detested sport, and even hated going for walks, so I spent most of my time with my nose in a book. I was the only girl in a family of five brothers, and I was quite quiet – but in the world of my books, I was strong, and beautiful – the lovely princess with the handsome prince, the girl who fights enormous monsters, the star ...

6. _____

As I grew older, books became my life. I didn't need to go out, or watch TV – I lived the highs and lows of my characters in their fight for success – I worried about the dancer who broke her leg, I cried when the rider's favourite horse died and I was so happy when the doctor got through floods and thunderstorms to save the life of a sick child!

7. _____

Of course, after time, I started to write my own stories. And of course, at first, I wasn't very good at it! I found it easier to write about sad things, so my first stories were full of disasters, accidents and deaths. My father read one story and couldn't quite understand why three characters died, a dog had an accident and a house burned down – and that was all before the end of the fourth page!

8. _____

Then one day my aunt said I should write about my own life. I was in bed with a broken arm, and even I got bored of books after a while. My aunt came to visit and brought me some paper and a pen. 'Go on,' she said, 'write about your life with five brothers. Tell it like it is.' And so I did. (Luckily, my right arm wasn't broken, so I could still write!)

9. _____

Ten years later, my first story was published. And I used those early childhood memories. The main character is a writer. And guess what? She breaks her arm falling out of a tree, and her aunt comes to visit – and then she becomes a very famous writer! And me? Well, I'm still waiting ...

D. Read the following paragraph and fill in the blanks with the signal words or enumerators given.

10. _____, I studied literature. I studied the literature of authors from many different countries. It was a very interesting program. 11. _____ it was hard to get a job with a degree in literature. 12. _____ I studied library and information science. It was easier to find a job as a librarian.
(then, but, first)

E. Read the following paragraph, find the genre of it and answer the question.

Through the window, gently sloping green pastures with cows, calves, and bulls can be seen- the bells clang all day and night, it is very relaxing to listen to. Down the valley is the main part of the village. Beyond that, the snow capped mountains spread out. You can see really steep black rocks and a waterfall, and the snow line is above. One can watch it change colour through the day, from white to pink to a deep red at sunset.

13. The paragraph is

- a) narrative b) procedural c) descriptive

14. It is implied in the paragraph that

- a) the place is in a city.
b) the place is in the country.
c) not many people live there.

F. Find the definition of the underlined word I the paragraph below.

15. During the Middle Ages in Europe, the people had to pay a high tax to the king. They paid the tax because the king promised to protect them. Sometimes this payment for protection was very expensive, and the people became poor.

A tax is

- a) money b) bill c) payment for protection

G. Reorder the sentences below to make a paragraph.

16. High up on a mountain pass, they found the body of a man lying on the ice. 17. It was lying face downward. 18. On a September day in 1991, two Germans were climbing the mountains between Austria and Italy. 19. The mountain ice had melted more than usual and so the body had come to the surface. 20. The skeleton was in perfect condition, except for a wound in the head. 21. The hands were still holding the wooden handle of an ax and on the feet there were very simple leather and cloth boots. 22. At that height, (10,499 feet, or 3,200 metres), the ice is usually permanent, but 1991 had been an especially warm year. 23. There was still skin on the bones and the remains of some clothes.

The order of the sentences: _____

H. Underline the examples in the paragraphs below.

24. There are many different kinds of flowers in the world. Even things that you would never consider a flower! Broccoli and cauliflower are both flowers. Many different spices that you use in your cooking every day are also flowers.

25. Although every shopping mall is a bit different in design, shoppers often feel comfortable in a new mall. That is because malls share certain features. You can almost always find most of the following: a department store, a pharmacy, a toy store, a bookshop, clothing shops for all ages, shoe shops, a bank, and places to eat. These businesses are all under one roof. Most malls are enclosed, so that shoppers never have to go outdoors once they get to the mall. Some malls also have doors to shops on the outside of the mall. Usually a mall is surrounded by a large parking area.

GOOD LUCK!

Each correct answer is 4 points.

APPENDIX 9

Name: Medine KARAKUS Date: 26.07.2009
C7

KWL Chart

	K What I Know	W What I Want to Know	L What I Learned
	I know how to find for example.	I want to learn about ecology.	I learned how to find the meaning of word in a paragraph.
05.03.2009	I know how to find first, second, last, finally.	I want to learn to use them in writing.	I learned to order sentences.
17.03.2009	I know how to use heading.	I want to learn to use them in my exams.	I learned how to use subheading.
13.03.2009	I know how to use first, then, although, but and so.	I want to use them in writing.	I learned how to use in addition, unlike, in general.
26.03.2009	I wasn't having some signal words but I'm having a lot of new words now.	I want to write long text.	I learned how to find main ideas and supporting details.
03.04.2009	I know some words.	I want to use them in writing.	I learned new word.
09.04.2009	I know to organize to the text.	I want to organize ideas very well.	I learned how to begin the organization of a text.

Name: Olivia JALGOKDate: 26.02.09

KWL Chart

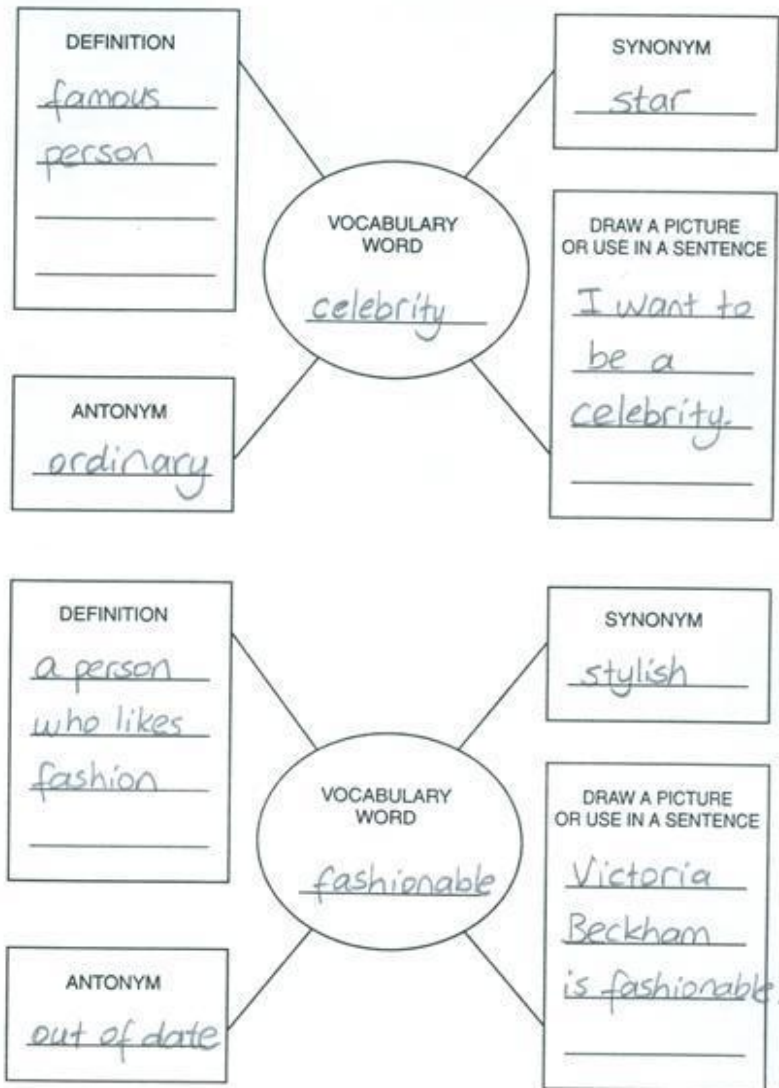
	K What I Know	W What I Want to Know	L What I Learned
	I know to find the meaning of word in a dictionary but I don't know find the meaning of word in a paragraph.	I want to know words about economy	I learned to find the meaning of word in a paragraph.
05.03.2009	I know Enumeration but I don't know very well	I want to write an article with this word	I learned to order sentences and I learned Enumeration very well. I learned a lot of words.
12.03.2009	I know to put heading the paragraph but I don't know very well	I want to learn more words.	I learned a lot of new word and I learned to put heading and subheading the paragraph.
13.03.2009	I know some signal words but I don't know other signal words	I want to learn more words and more signal words and I want to write an article with these signal words.	I learned a lot of new words and I learned a lot of signal words.
26.03.2009	I know to find main idea but not well.	I want to know more words and I want to find main idea easier.	I learned how I find main idea.
02.04.2009	I don't know to find a word's meaning in the paragraph	I want to find all word meaning in the paragraph	I learned to find a word's meaning in the paragraph

Name: Azime Nur SAYDate: 26.02.2009**KWL Chart**

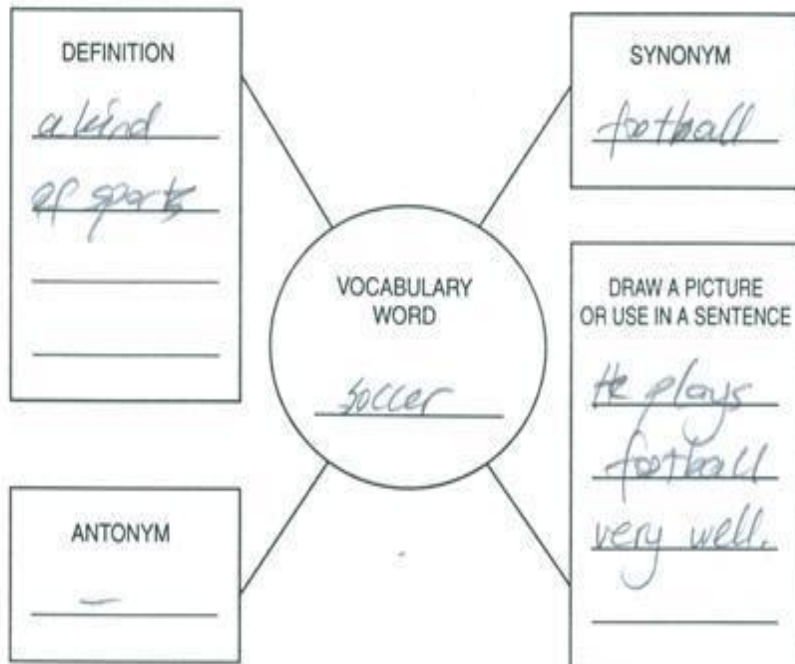
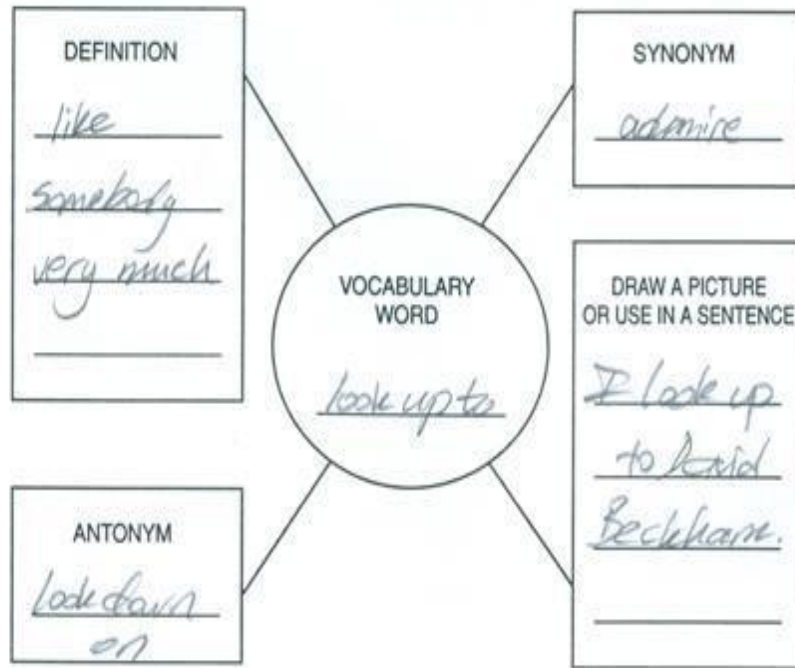
	K What I Know	W What I Want to Know	L What I Learned
	I know to find the examples.	I want to know words about administration.	I learned to find the meaning.
05.03.09	I know have to - must.	I want to use these in exams.	I learned to order sentences.
12.03.09	I know should.	I want to learn new words;	I learned to find to heading.
19.03.09	I know something signal words.	I want to use them writing.	I learned some new words.
26.03.09	I knew something phrasal verbs.	I want to learn new words.	I learned to find main idea.
02.04.09	I knew too many words.	I want to use them writing.	I learned to find context clues.
09.04.09	I knew new words.	I want to use to learn in exams.	I learned too many words.

APPENDIX 10

- E. Choose four new words from the article "Beckham: A Soccer Superstar" that you want to learn and remember. Make a word map for each word.



- E. Choose four new words from the article "Beckham: A Soccer Superstar" that you want to learn and remember. Make a word map for each word.



CURRICULUM VITAE

Name : Ebru KAYA
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Educational Background :

2008-2010 (MA) : Çukurova University, Institute of Social Sciences
 English Language Teaching Department
1995-1999 (BA) : Hacettepe University, Faculty of Education,
 English Language Teaching Department
1989-1995 : Adana Anatolian High School
1988-1989 : Private Adana College

Work Experience :

2005- ... : Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University,
 Department of Foreign Languages (English Instructor)
2005 : Remzi Özer Boarding School (Osmaniye)
2002- 2005 : Cumhuriyet Junior High School (Adana)
2000-2002 : Paşalı Boarding School (Feke / Adana)

Academic Honours :

Turkish – American Association, Teacher Training Workshop
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Languages :

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