

L2 LEARNERS' SELF IMAGE: A STUDY ON THE STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN READING SHORT STORIES IN L1 AND L2

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to present the results of a questionnaire regarding the first and the fourth-grade learners' opinions about reading strategies they employ while reading short stories in Turkish and in English. The participants of the study consist of first and fourth year students enrolled in the English Language Department, Faculty of Education, Cukurova University, Turkey. In order to achieve these aims, a questionnaire designed and administered by the researcher was used and the obtained data were analyzed by utilizing SPSS computer program.

Key Words: *Reading strategies, short story, mother tongue, foreign language.*

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, birinci ve dördüncü sınıf üniversite öğrencilerinin Türkçe ve İngilizce yazılmış kısa öyküleri okurken kullandıkları okuma stratejileri hakkındaki düşünceleri araştırılmıştır. Çalışmaya Çukurova Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı birinci ve dördüncü sınıf öğrencileri katılmıştır. Veriler araştırmacı tarafından hazırlanan bir anket aracılığıyla toplanmış ve SPSS programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Okuma stratejileri, kısa öykü, anadil, yabancı dil.*

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1. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.1. READING IN L1 AND L2

The differences between reading in L1 and L2 depend on various factors. Scholars have focused on different aspects of reading in the first and the second language. In Badwari's opinion (1992: 18)

for one learner to read in his native language, the task is essentially one of decoding the graphic representation of the language he already uses. The task of the L2 learner is infinitely more difficult. Even if he succeeds in decoding the written form of individual works, he may find that they do not go together in any pattern that is familiar or meaningful to him.

The differences between reading in one's mother tongue and in a foreign language may cause difficulty for the foreign language learner in terms of reading effectively. Coady (in Mei-Yun, 1989: 14) summarizes the three important factors on which efficient ESL reading depend.

1. Higher level conceptual abilities
2. Background knowledge
3. Process strategies

On the basis of differences between L1 and L2 reading, role of L1 and L2 readers can be summarized as follows:

1. L1 readers just decode the graphic representation of the language they already use whereas L2 readers are involved in a more difficult task
2. L2 readers attend more to bottom-up processes than L1 readers since their restricted linguistic ability will make it more difficult for them to use contextual clues that L1 readers use
3. L2 readers rely more on context and guessing than L1 readers, simply because L2 readers have to compensate for the lack of good linguistic skills
4. L2 readers bring a great deal of background information with them to help in the reading process.
5. If L1 readers have inefficient reading habits, they are likely to be less successful readers in L2 (Badwari, 1992: Paran, 1996: Richards, 1990).

1.2. READING LITERARY AND NON LITERARY TEXTS

As opposed to reading expository texts that require readers to find the truth in them, literary texts assign a different role to the reader. Cole and

Lindemann (1990: 11-12) focus on two kinds of reading: reading for information and reading for pleasure. The former refers to reading for outcome. When the reading is over, readers have learned something; thus, they become more knowledgeable whereas the latter refers to reading to have feelings and attitudes stimulated. In Cole and Lindemann's opinion (1990: 12),

when we read for pleasure, we read to experience a semblance of reality and to have our feelings stimulated rather than reading for a useful outcome after the reading, we read for the pleasure that is produced during the reading we become engaged in or by the experience.

In other words, the reader of a novel, short story or poem differs from that of a scientific book or a newspaper. In Bock's opinion (1993: 2) "during reading [literary texts], the reader tries to give the text a coherent interpretation. The reader makes predictions ...what the reader brings to the text is just as important as what s/he finds there". In other words, the text becomes the joint product of the author and the reader. The author creates his/her work and leaves it to the reader who is to recreate it depending on his/her values, opinions, beliefs and social/historical background. Widdowson (in Bock, 1993: 2) claims that "reading is regarded not as a reaction to a text, but as an interaction between the writer and the reader mediated through the text".

The reader then makes use of all s/he brings to the reading experience. In Türeli's opinion (1998: 42) "literary works are the areas where the writer and the reader meet each other, and in these areas, there are questions and the reader's intellectual and emotional reactions given as responses to these questions. In this two-way process; in other words, in the cooperation of the writer and the reader, recent theories have put the emphasis much more on the reader who re-creates the work and reshapes it. Adler and Doren (1972: 204) point out the importance of reading actively in literature. In their opinion, before the reader expresses his / her likes and dislikes s/he should have tried enough to appreciate the work. A reader can not read or appreciate a novel by reading it passively. In order to achieve appreciation as to achieve understanding, the reader must read actively (1972: 204). The strategies employed during the process of reading literary works imply the reader's being able to concentrate on the texts, think ahead, hypothesize, modify or reformulate hypotheses, interpret / infer meanings, discovering the self by taking an active role and employing appropriate strategies needed for a better understanding. The process of reading turns out to be a process of re-creating what we read. As Barnett and Cain (2000: 5) put it "our reading is a re-creation; the author has tried to guide our responses, but inevitably our own experiences, including our ethnic background and our education, contribute to our responses". That is, the

recreation of the text is determined by cultural, social, psychological and other factors. As a result, each time a text is read by a reader, a new meaning is created.

how a text means for us [readers] at a particular reading is all we can really attempt to articulate. The reader's understanding of a text is determined by his/her language and background (biases, ideas, beliefs, education, critical decision, etc) which are not invented by her/him but are socially determined by the institutions and discursive practices that constitute the social networks s/he is involved in. (Birch in Türeli 1995: 42)

Interpreting or understanding a literary text depends on the amount of the contribution on the part of the reader. In the process of creation of the meaning, interpreting, evaluating, and analysing a piece of literary work factors such as the reader's background in regard to literary competence and linguistic competence as well as cultural competence, personal factors such as age, gender, motivation, and interest play a big role.

1.3 SHORT STORY AS A LITERARY GENRE

Short stories have been described in many different ways some of which are compatible with each other. The definitions given below may be used to develop insights into what a short story is.

- It's a work of fiction, so it involves the imagination.
- It's about people who do not really exist.
- It describes something at a moment of crisis.
- It has a plot, and characters who are somehow connected with each other.

(Lazar, 1993)

It is certain that reading each literary genre will display differences so will short stories. Therefore, the reader needs to be involved in a kind of reading during which s/he experiences the extra dimensions of fiction, and this starts with the reader's adopting his/her role as an active participant in the process of reading short stories. The relationship among the author, the text, and the reader needs to be considered as to come up with a better understanding of how readers develop individual meanings and respond to short stories. In the most general sense, the aim of the author in writing short stories seem to be creating a fictional world in which s/he conveys his emotions, feelings, perspective, and world view. It is this fictional world that the author invites readers to share his/her world and to discover what this fictional world offers

them and to develop awareness as to reflect on the story and themselves at the same time. In other words, the goal of the writer in a short story is to inform the reader about a particular fictional world (Leech and Short, 1989: 257). The way in which this fictional world presented by the author is constructed and shaped is influenced by many factors. The technique of the author and the reader's ability to realize and release the technique on the basis of verbal clues and patterns deployed by the author play an important role in constructing and shaping the fictional world (Fowler in Türeli 1998: 98). In fact, "the writer can assume relatively little about the receiver of her/his message or the context in which it will be received" (Leech and Short, 1989: 268). In addition, Daiches (1958: 54) claims that "the writer of the fiction creates insights through his means of expressing series of imaginary situations." However, as Leech and Short (1989: 359) put it "the writer can of course assume that s/he shares with his/her readers a common background knowledge and experience, a set of presuppositions, sympathies and standarts ..." As in other literary genres, in reading short stories, readers make use of their previous experiences and analyze/respond to them accordingly. That is to say, the features of a short story and the way these specific features are organized within the text contribute to readers' response. In addition to knowledge of the elements of short story, the utilization of some strategies enhance reading, analysing, and responding to short stories. The strategies which readers might utilize can be summarised as follows:

1. **Deciding on a specific purpose:** The reader decides on a reading purpose – for example, following the plot, comparing characters or focusing on the development of a specific character or even finding answers to questions given by the teacher.
2. **Reading the title, looking at illustrations and building expectations:** In this stance, the reader makes use of the title of the text and the illustrations in the book (if available); thus, s/he creates expectations which act as an accelerator to begin reading the literary work.
3. **Predicting:** Goodman (in Grabe, 1991: 377) emphasizes the importance of predicting information, confirming or reformulating predictions in the process of reading. The reader needs to predict how the story will develop or will end. The ability to predict facilitates understanding, and it contributes to the involvement of the reader.
4. **Adjusting reading pace:** Adjusting the pace of reading and deciding on how many times to read a literary text are other important

strategies that successful readers utilize. The reader needs to read the text at least twice: first reading aims to gain an overall impression, whereas second reading mostly focuses on critical reading

5. **Marking the text (underlining difficult words and note taking):** Underlining difficult words or taking notes during reading help the reader to highlight parts which s/he needs to work on later. Marking the text (especially note taking) can also help reader in summarizing the story, forming questions or even answering questions easily without being lost in the whole text.
6. **Summarizing:** “Summarizing helps learners to focus on the content of the text” (Hewitt, 1955: 29). Writing a summary of the short-story being read requires a complete understanding of the text.
7. **Dealing with unfamiliar words:** The successful reader first tries to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by looking for clues in the context; s/he tries to use other words and his/her linguistic knowledge to arrive meanings of unknown words. If contextual clues do not help, s/he looks them up in a dictionary. Stopping for each unfamiliar word prevents the reader from having pleasure in reading, and it causes a feeling of inefficiency.
8. **Inferring:** When reading literary works, the reader may come across with things that are stated indirectly by the writer. The successful reader infers the information that may be an important point in the text. In Cole and Lindemann’s opinion (1990: 23), “when readers read inferentially they go beyond the literary level – become sensitive to innuendo, suggestion and implication.”
9. **Interpreting:** Interpreting the implied meanings in a literary work may act as a crucial factor in comprehending what is being said. The ability to interpret requires sufficient cultural background information, language proficiency and literary competence the integration of which helps reader to make connections between what is given and what is implied by the writer. Success in making interpretations depends on knowing what to use in the text.
10. **Imagining:** “To imagine means to make images” (Cole and Lindemann, 1990: 21). In Oxford’s opinion (1989: 61), “a good way to remember what has been heard or read” in the new language is to create a mental image of it. When it comes to reading short stories, imagining the setting or the characters helps the reader to make meanings easily. The successful reader uses his/her imagination

while reading and thus "the work becomes personally meaningful" (Cole and Lindemann, 1990: 21). Imagining can also help the reader to become involved in the work. As the reader is engaged in reading a short-story, s/he enters a world in which s/he becomes engaged in imagining. Thus, the reader both enjoys and easily comprehends what is being presented.

11. **Using knowledge of the world:** Although literary works present a new context, a different world, the reader needs to use her/his knowledge of the world to make meanings. Using one's knowledge of the world helps his/her in understanding what is being said as s/he makes comparisons and tries to relate what s/he already knows to what is likely to be learnt or experienced.
12. **Filling in the gaps and rereading:** This strategy may be considered as one of the most important strategies that successful readers employ. Gaps in a literary work act as an essential part of the literary text. In Iser's opinion,

gaps are bound to open up, and offer a free play of interpretation for the specific way in which the various views can be connected with one another. These gaps give the reader a chance to build his own bridges, relating the different aspects of the object which have thus been revealed to him. (Iser in Newton, 1988: 229)

13. **Being involved:** Iser (in Newton, 1988) points out that "indeterminate elements of literary prose perhaps even of all literature – represents the most important link between text and reader. This process activates the reader in using his own ideas in order to fulfill the intention of the text (1988: 228).

As Iser points out, literary texts as opposed to non-literary ones reveal out the important, interactive role of the reader in terms of understanding messages in a literary work. Reading literature, then, requires the active participation of the reader. Thus, the successful reader becomes engaged in reading, enters the world of fiction created by the author, or imagines the characters. In each stance of reading, the reader interacts with the text by employing different strategies.

14. **Recognizing and comprehending figurative language:** "Figurative language is any departure from plain statement or the literal use of words" (Bozkurt, 1977: 97). Recognizing and

understanding figures of speech such as imagery, symbol, metaphor, irony, and simile require different approaches to the text being read. The successful reader not only knows which figures of speech are used but also why they are used and the implied meanings/effects resulting from their usage.

15. **Understanding writer's style:** "An important part of the pleasure in reading is being able to appreciate why a writer chooses a certain word or expression and how s/he uses it" (Greenall and Swan, 1986: 4). The successful reader then knows how the language in the text (short-story) creates particular meanings and effects. S/he carefully examines specific words/patterns or sentences that have particular effects on what is being said. S/he can easily make a connection between what is said and how it is said. Appreciating the style, therefore, requires sufficient knowledge of the language (grammatical knowledge) and the ability to relate this knowledge to its effect on meaning while reading/analyzing literary works, the reader mostly focuses on words (their uses both in literary and non-literary texts), grammatical structures – especially deviations from the standard form. In this way, the reader forms a triangle in which s/he connects what is said, how it is said and why it is said.
16. **Evaluating the text:** Evaluating the literary texts leads the reader to critical thinking/reading. Successful reader, then, thinks about how and why the text is written. Some of the questions that may help to evaluate the text are as follows:
 - What is the purpose of writing?
 - Who is the writer?
 - What does the information reveal about the writer?
 - How successful is the writer in conveying his/her message?
 - How does s/he convey the message?
 - Why does s/he transmit her/his message in that specific way?

2. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to find out first-grade and fourth-grade learners' opinions concerning the reading strategies they employ during reading short stories written in their mother tongue (Turkish) and in the foreign language (English). It focuses on describing and comparing learners' reading strategies used in reading short-stories (both in Turkish and in English). As the aim was to describe learners' reading strategies used for understanding/analyzing short-

stories, a descriptive design (as research design) was used. A questionnaire developed and administered by the researcher was utilized to investigate how learners read short stories. The obtained data were analyzed by utilizing **SPSS** computer program to find out whether there was a significant difference between the groups and between the reading strategies applied in Turkish and in English.

2.1. PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this study were randomly selected from the total population of first and fourth year students enrolled at English Language Teaching Department, Faculty of Education, Çukurova University. The data were collected from 50 first year and fourth year students. First year students did not take any literature courses at the department whereas fourth year student had one literature course each semester for three years.

2.2. INSTRUMENTATION

In this study, a questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for data collection (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was administered to all subjects in both groups in their regular classes and enough time was allotted for completing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was written in Turkish so that learners would not have difficulty in understanding the items. The primary aim of the questionnaire was to investigate reading strategies that learners employed while reading short-stories written in Turkish and in English.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire administered to both groups: namely Group 1 (first-year students) and Group 2 (fourth-year students). The data elicited from each group are compared to one another to find out whether a significant difference among the groups

3.1. ITEMS ELICITING STUDENTS' READING STRATEGIES IN READING TURKISH AND ENGLISH STORIES

Items in this group aimed to investigate the reading strategies that students in both groups (first and fourth graders) claimed to have been using while reading short-stories in Turkish and in English.

Table 3.1 First-Year Students' Reading Strategies

Item	Turkish								English							
	1		2		3		4		1		2		3		4	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Making prediction before reading	10	20	24	48	14	28	2	4	11	22	17	34	15	30	7	14
Making prediction during reading	5	10	17	34	17	34	11	22	11	22	12	24	16	32	11	22
Underlining difficult words or parts	8	16	9	18	16	32	17	34	9	18	21	42	12	24	8	16
Taking notes	6	12	9	18	13	26	22	44	13	36	14	28	13	26	10	20
Summarizing	3	6	5	10	17	34	25	50	2	4	13	26	19	38	16	32
Interpreting the message	12	24	21	42	10	20	7	14	11	22	18	36	16	32	5	10
Interpreting differently at each time of reading	6	12	12	24	24	48	8	16	5	10	21	42	17	34	7	14
Getting into the fictional world	15	30	11	22	20	40	4	8	14	28	7	14	23	46	6	12
Using own experiences	8	16	17	34	21	42	4	8	12	24	20	40	15	30	3	6
Reading without skipping any part	10	20	22	44	12	24	6	12	12	24	22	44	11	22	5	10
Guessing unknown words from the context	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	18	20	40	16	32	5	10
Using dictionaries	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	17	34	19	38	11	22
Rereading	6	12	19	38	25	50	-	-	9	18	20	40	18	36	3	6
Using knowledge of the world	5	10	15	30	22	44	8	16	3	6	13	26	22	44	12	24
Visualizing the setting and characters	23	46	14	28	8	16	5	10	14	28	21	42	13	26	2	4
Making comparisons	14	28	18	36	13	26	5	10	14	28	21	42	13	26	2	4
Translating sentences	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	15	30	19	38	14	28
Thinking about how to read	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	19	38	18	36	9	18
Thinking about difficulties encountered	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	16	21	42	17	34	4	8
Obtaining background information	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8	12	24	19	38	15	30

1: Always 2: Usually 3: Sometimes 4: Never

Table 3.2 Fourth-Year Students' Reading Strategies

Item	Turkish								English							
	1		2		3		4		1		2		3		4	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Making prediction before reading	18	36	17	34	14	28	1	2	18	36	21	42	9	18	2	4
Making prediction during reading	5	10	14	28	26	52	5	10	14	28	7	14	23	46	6	12
Underlining difficult words or parts	4	8	10	20	14	28	22	44	15	30	14	28	14	28	7	14
Taking notes	5	10	5	10	16	32	24	48	11	22	9	18	14	28	16	32
Summarizing	-	-	3	6	11	22	36	72	2	4	7	14	17	34	24	48
Interpreting the message	16	32	20	40	13	26	1	2	14	28	15	30	19	38	2	4
Interpreting differently at each time of reading	1	2	17	34	26	52	6	12	4	8	18	36	23	46	5	10
Getting into the fictional world	26	52	14	28	9	18	1	2	22	44	11	22	16	32	1	2
Using own experiences	11	22	16	32	20	40	3	6	15	30	18	36	16	32	1	2
Reading without	20	40	15	30	10	20	5	10	19	38	20	40	9	18	2	4
Guessing unknown words from the context	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	22	21	42	12	24	6	12
Using dictionaries	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	8	16	23	46	17	34
Rereading	10	20	14	28	25	50	1	2	16	32	19	38	13	26	2	4
Using knowledge of the world	1	2	6	12	25	50	18	36	1	2	5	10	24	48	20	40
Visualizing the setting and characters	31	62	10	20	7	14	2	4	27	54	16	32	7	14	-	-
Making comparisons	20	40	23	46	6	12	1	2	15	30	18	36	15	30	2	4
Translating sentences	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	3	6	25	50	19	38
Thinking about how to read	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	10	11	22	21	42	13	26
Thinking about difficulties encountered	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	22	44	20	40	5	10
Obtaining background information	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	12	11	22	22	44	11	22

1: Always 2: Usually 3: Sometimes 4: Never

3.1.1. Making prediction before reading

These two items elicited whether learners make predictions before reading the short-story. Results shown in Table 3.1 reveal that first-grade learners make predictions more when reading short-stories in Turkish. The frequency of learners who said they never make predictions before reading Turkish short-stories (f: 2, 4%) is less than the frequency for English short-stories (f: 7, 14%). When we compare first-year and fourth-year learners who said that they always, generally or sometimes make predictions we see that fourth graders make more predictions than first graders both in Turkish and English.

3.1.2. Making predictions during reading

The results shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 indicate that more than half of the total number of learners in first and fourth grade makes predictions about how the story will develop. The results for both English and Turkish do not reveal any significant difference.

3.1.3. Underlining difficult words/parts in the story

The analysis of data for these items indicate that the frequency of first-grade learners who said they always or usually underline difficult words/phrases in the story is higher for stories in English when compared to the frequency for stories in Turkish ([T]f: 17, 34%; [E]f: 30, 60%). Similar results can be seen in Table 3.2 for fourth graders. The frequency of learners who said they always/usually underline words/phrases in the story increased in stories written in English when compared to stories in Turkish ([T] f: 14, 28%; [E]f: 19, 38%)

3.1.4. Taking notes

Items for this strategy were designed to find out whether learners took notes while reading the story. The results shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 reveal that the frequency of first-grade learners who said they always, usually or sometimes take notes (f: 78) is very close to fourth graders' (f: 76).

The analysis of the item which was designed for stories in English also displays similarities between the groups in terms of taking notes. The frequency of first-grade learners who said they never take notes (f: 16, 32%) is very close to fourth graders' (f: 10, 20%). In other words, learners in both groups take notes while reading stories in English more than they do in reading stories in

Turkish. The table below summarizes the results of the item eliciting students' tendencies in regard to taking notes.

Table 3.3 Students' Tendencies in Regard to Taking Notes

	First graders		Fourth graders	
	Always	Never	Always	Never
Turkish	12%	44%	10%	48%
English	22%	32%	26%	20%

3.1.5. Summarizing

As it is seen in Table 3.1, half of the first-year students do not write summaries for stories in English, whereas, more than half of the total number of learners (first graders) write summaries for stories in English (f: 34, 78%). Similarly, the results shown in Table 3.2 reveal that more than half of the total number of fourth graders (f: 36, 72%) do not write summaries for Turkish stories. However, the frequency of learners who said they write summaries increased for stories in English (f: 26).

3.1.6. Interpreting the message

These items were designed to elicit whether learners make interpretations about the message and the writer's success in conveying the message. The results displayed in Table 9 show that there is not a significant difference between first graders' interpretations in Turkish and English. More than half of the total number of learners make interpretations about the message for stories written in English (f: 43, 86%) and in Turkish (f: 45, 90%). As in first graders, more than half of the learners interpret the message both in English stories (f: 49, 98%) and Turkish ones (f: 48, 96%).

3.1.7. Interpreting the story differently at each time of reading

When we look at the results in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2, we see that first grade learners' interpretations at different times differ more than the fourth graders'. The frequency of first-grade learners who said they interpret the story differently at each time of reading is higher (f: 6, 12%) than the fourth graders' (f: 1, 2%). This difference can also be seen for the stories written in English, however, the difference for Turkish stories is higher. The difference between English and Turkish stories is also statistically significant ($X^2 27.8 > 16.9$; $p = 0.05$).

3.1.8. Getting into the fictional world (items (T17/E25))

These items aimed to find out whether learners stepped into the fictional world and identified themselves with the characters depicted in the story. Nearly the total number of learners in both groups felt emotionally involved in the story. The frequency of first graders who said they always, usually, or sometimes felt characters' feelings was $f: 49$ (98%), which is very close to the frequency of fourth graders' ($f: 46$, 92%]; $f: 44$, 88%) (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2)

3.1.9. Using own experiences

The analysis of these items does not reveal any significant differences between the groups. In both groups, learners mostly refer to their experiences related to the subject-matter. The frequency of learners who said they always, usually or sometimes use their background knowledge as an aid can be shown as:

Table 3.4. Students' Tendencies in Regard to Using Their Background Knowledge

	First graders	Fourth graders
Turkish	46	47
English	47	49

As it is shown above learners in both groups use their own experiences more in reading English stories as compared to Turkish ones.

3.1.10. Reading without skipping any part of a story

The results indicate that first-year students' answers do not display significant differences in terms of reading without skipping parts of a story in Turkish and in English. However, when we look at Table 3.2 we see that the frequency of fourth graders who skip parts of a story in Turkish is higher ($f: 5$, 10%) than the frequency for stories in English ($f: 2$, 4%). In other words, fourth graders are more skillful in deciding which parts of the story are important as compared to first graders.

3.1.11. Guessing unknown words from the context

This item was designed to investigate learners' skill in guessing unknown words from the context (in stories written in English). As displayed in Table 3.2, the frequencies for choice 2 (usually) and 3 (sometimes) outnumber the frequency of choice 1 (always). Only 18% of the first graders and 22% of the fourth graders (see Table 3.2) said that they always guess the meaning of unknown words from the context.

3.1.12. Using dictionaries

When we analyze the results for item 29, we see that first graders and fourth graders display differences in terms of using dictionaries (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2). The frequency of fourth graders who said they never used dictionaries (f: 17) is higher than the frequency of first graders (f: 11). The difference may be due to the fact that fourth-grade learners are more skillful in deducing meanings from the context. The result also confirms this idea (the percentage of fourth graders who said they used context to guess meanings (22%) outnumbers first graders' (18%).

3.1.13 Reading the parts of a story

The analysis of these items reveals out an important result (see Table 3.1 and 3.2). Learners in both grades reread more in English as compared to Turkish. The frequency of learners both in first grade and fourth grade who always reread increase in reading English short-stories.

3.1.14. Using knowledge of the world

The analysis indicates differences between the groups. First-year students outperform fourth graders in terms of using knowledge of the world. In other words, the frequency of first-year students who said they never use knowledge of the world while reading short-stories is considerably less than the frequency of fourth-year students in both languages.

3.1.15. Visualizing the setting and the characters

The items for this strategy were designed to find out whether learners visualized the setting and characters while reading short-stories. The results shown in Table 3.1 reveal that first graders imagine more when reading short-stories in Turkish (f: 45, 90%) as compared to reading English stories (f: 43, 86%). The most striking difference can be seen by a separate analysis of choices. The frequency of first graders who said they always imagined the

setting/characters while reading Turkish stories (f: 23, 46%) is higher than the frequency for English stories (f: 14, 28%) . Similarly, fourth graders imagined more in reading Turkish stories. However, when first and fourth graders are compared it is seen that fourth graders are better at imagining than first graders in reading English short-stories.

3.1.16. Making comparisons

When we compare the groups in terms of reading stories in English we do not see any significant differences. In both groups, only 2 of the learners said that they never made comparisons while reading stories (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2).

3.1.17. Translating sentences

This item elicited whether learners translated sentences into Turkish while reading short-stories in English. The results shown in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 reveal that the frequency of fourth graders who said they never translated sentences (f: 19, 38%) is higher than the frequency of first graders' (f: 14, 28%). In other words, first-year students said that they translate sentences in the story more than fourth graders do (first graders: f= 31 [including choices always, usually, sometimes]; fourth graders: f= 36). The difference between the groups is also statistically significant ($X^2 = 9.77$; $p = 0.05$).

3.1.18. Thinking about what to focus on before reading

This item aimed to find out whether learners thought about what to focus on a story/how to read a story. The results show that there is not a significant difference between the groups in terms of choices 1 (always), 2 (usually), 3 (sometimes). However, when we look at the frequency of first graders and fourth graders who said they never think about how to read a story, we see that only 9 of the first graders said they never think about the parts to be focused on, whereas, 19 of the fourth graders gave the same answer. In other words, first graders need to think about the reading strategies more than fourth graders do (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2). The reason for this difference may be due to fourth graders' experience in tackling with short-stories.

3.1.19. Thinking about the difficulties encountered in reading and finding solutions

The results shown in Table 3.1 indicate that more than half of the students in the first grade (considering items always and usually) think about the difficulties and tried to find solutions (f: 46, 92%). The frequency for the same item in regard to fourth-graders was f: 45. However, the frequency of first graders who said they always think about the difficulties encountered was higher (f: 8, 16%) than the frequency for fourth graders (f: 3, 6%).

3.1.20. Obtaining background information

When we compare the groups we see that in both groups more than half of the total population of learners obtain background information before reading the story (first graders: f= 35; fourth graders: f= 39) Being a good reader of short-stories involves employing the required strategies and avoiding the ones which result in an inefficient reading such as using dictionaries frequently or translating sentences

The analysis of results also reveal the common strategies used by both groups. The graph below presents the distribution of reading strategies always employed by both groups while reading short-stories in Turkish and English.

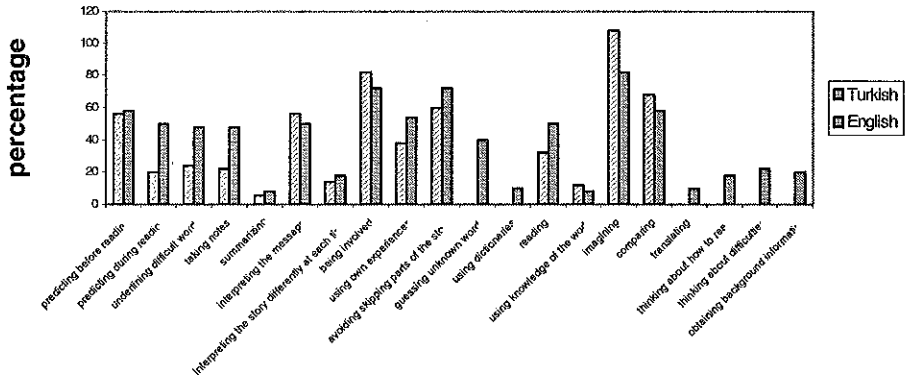


Figure 1: Common Reading Strategies Used by Both Groups.

When we analyze the results shown in Figure 1 we see that learners in both groups show tendency to use some of the reading strategies more such as being involved in the reading process, visualizing, comparing, getting into the fictional world and predicting . However, the results show differences in terms of reading short-stories in the mother tongue (Turkish) and the foreign language. Students in both groups take notes, predict, underline difficult words, and reread

the story more in English than they do in Turkish. We can infer that regardless of the experience, both first and fourth-year students are more involved in employing required reading strategies in reading short-stories (written in English) such as taking notes, using own experiences or rereading the story. The difference in regard to reading in mother tongue and the foreign language may be due to students' being more conscious about a task in the foreign language.

An overview

Reading strategies that foreign language learners employ while reading short-stories in the mother tongue and in the foreign language display differences. The analysis of the items eliciting first-grade and fourth-grade learners' opinions concerning the strategies they employ reveals differences among the groups. When we compare the groups we may conclude that fourth-grade learners are better readers than first graders as they employ the required strategies; visualize the setting and characters, reread, guess unknown words, predict, compare, interpret the message more in both languages. The difference between the groups may be due to the fourth graders' competence in reading short-stories in English. Another reason for such a difference might also be due to their experiences related to literature courses.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

4.1 CONCLUSION

This study has investigated first and fourth graders' opinions concerning the reading strategies they use while reading short-stories in L1 (Turkish) and L2 (English).

The analysis of the data have revealed that the first and the fourth-year students display differences in terms of employing reading strategies in reading short-stories. It has been observed that fourth graders predict, imagine and make comparison more than first graders do both in L1 and L2. However, first-year students summarize, translate the sentences into mother tongue more when compared to fourth graders. When we focus on the frequent use of required reading strategies (strategies used by good readers) in reading short-stories such as making predictions, getting into the fictional world, imagining the setting and the characters, and guessing unknown words from the context, we see that fourth-year students seem to employ the reading strategies more both in L1 and L2 than the first-year students do.

In general, the differences between the groups in terms of reading strategies might be the result of the experience students have had both in literature classes and in other classes which contributed to the improvement of reading skills. The differences may also be attributed to reading skills students have in their mother tongue, which (Grabe, 1991: 388) describes as "the social contexts of literacy use in students' first language". Therefore, we can suggest that fourth-year students' higher success in reading short-stories in L1 and L2 results from the experience they have gained throughout for four years and their reading experience in L1.

Another important finding of the study concerns the differences between reading in L1 and L2. The results of this study have shown that both first and fourth-year students are more involved in taking notes, rereading, predicting, underlining difficult words, using own experiences, and summarizing while reading short-stories in L2 when compared to reading short-stories in L1. The tendency to employ such strategies in L2 may be due to the fact that summarizing and rereading a passage help learners comprehend the text, and taking notes facilitates determining important points to be focused on. When compared to reading in L1, reading in a foreign language (L2) requires "more than decoding the graphic presentation of the language" (Badwari, 1992: 18). Foreign-language learner needs to decode both graphic representations and their meaning, which becomes a more difficult task with literary texts and short-stories in which the meanings and messages are frequently implied. Therefore, summarizing, rereading, visualizing the setting and the characters, predicting, and taking notes may help learners comprehend the short-story in L2 in a better way.

4.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study is limited to the investigation of opinions concerning reading strategies that the first and fourth-year students at ELT Department employ while reading short-stories in L1 and L2. A further research might be designed by using the 'think-aloud' technique. The students can be given a short-story and be asked to think aloud while reading the story, which may help the researcher to capture the process of reading.

Another research might be to investigate the effects of a strategy training program which aims to promote learners' autonomy in reading short-stories.

It can also be suggested to search into differences in strategy use resulting from gender.

A final suggestion might be to explore and compare the reading strategies learners employ in reading other genres of literature such as poetry, novel, and drama.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

	1. Always	2. Usually	3. Sometimes	4. Never
1- I make predictions about the story before reading	1	2	3	4
2- I make predictions during reading	1	2	3	4
3- I underline difficult words or parts in the story	1	2	3	4
4- I take notes while reading the story	1	2	3	4
5- I write summary for the story	1	2	3	4
6- I make interpretations about the message and the writer's success in conveying the message	1	2	3	4
7- I interpret the story differently at each time of reading	1	2	3	4
8- I get into the fictional world while reading the story (I identify myself with the characters depicted in the story)	1	2	3	4
9- I use my own experiences related to the subject matter while reading the story	1	2	3	4
10. I read the story without skipping any parts of it	1	2	3	4
11. I guess the meaning of unknown words from the context.	1	2	3	4
12. I use dictionaries while reading the story	1	2	3	4
13. I reread some parts of the story	1	2	3	4
14. I use knowledge of the world while reading the story	1	2	3	4
15. I visualize the setting and the characters while reading the story	1	2	3	4
16. I make comparisons while reading the story (comparing the characters, their speech, clothes)	1	2	3	4
17. I translate the sentences into my mother tongue while reading the story	1	2	3	4
18. I think about what to focus on before reading the story	1	2	3	4
19. I think about the difficulties I encountered after reading the story	1	2	3	4
20. I obtain background information before reading	1	2	3	4