



## THE EFFECT OF COGNITIVE AND COMPENSATION STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON READING COMPREHENSION SKILL<sup>1</sup>

BİLİŞSEL VE TELAFİ EDİCİ STRATEJİ EĞİTİMİNİN OKUDUĞUNU ANLAMA BECERİSİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ<sup>2</sup>

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**Özet:** Bir dile bütün becerileriyle hâkim olabilmek zorlu ve zaman alan bir süreç gerektirir. Dil öğrenme stratejileri bu süreç esnasında öğrenenlere dili öğrenmeyi daha etkin ve zahmetsiz kılma noktasında katkı sağlayabilecek unsurlar arasında değerlendirilmektedir. Okuduğunu anlama dil becerileri arasında en önemli boyutlardan birisini teşkil etmekte ve dil öğrenme stratejileri diğer dil becerileri açısından olduğu gibi bu beceri bağlamında da bazı katkılar sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma bilişsel ve telafi edici stratejilerin okuduğunu anlama becerisi bağlamında öğrenci başarısı üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisinin olup olmadığını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı'nda öğrenim gören 60 birinci sınıf öğrencisinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. 30 öğrenci deney grubunda yer alırken diğer 30 öğrenci kontrol grubunda yer almıştır. Deney grubu okuduğunu anlama becerisi üzerine strateji temelli bir eğitim alırken kontrol grubu strateji odaklı olmayan geleneksel bir yaklaşımla eğitim görmüştür. İki grup arasında ön-test ve son-test sonuçları açısından anlamlı bir fark bulunmamasına karşın deney grubunun ön ve son-testleri bağımsız olarak incelendiğinde istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilerlemenin kaydedildiğini görülmektedir. Kontrol grubuna ilişkin bağımsız istatistiksel analizler ise anlamlı bir ilerleme ortaya koymamaktadır. Bu bulgular ışığında dil öğrenme stratejilerinin okuduğunu anlama becerisi bağlamında katkı sağlayabileceği sonucuna ulaşılmış ve bu çerçevede sınıf içi uygulamalar için öneriler sunulmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Strateji, Dil Öğrenimi, Okuduğunu Anlama, Öğrenen Özerkliği.

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**Extended Abstract:** *Language learning is generally viewed as a quite demanding process. Considering its multi-faceted and intricate nature, there is an ongoing and ever-growing quest for new ways to render the learning period shorter and more effective. In this process, some contributive means such as language learning strategies are offered and employed as boosting and facilitating factors. Having its roots in the studies conducted to identify the common characteristics of successful language learners in 1970s, language learning strategies appear to be effective in terms of different language skills. As reading comprehension skill constitutes one of the most important aspects of competence in a language, language learning strategies promise some facilities in this context, too. There are some strategies applicable for reading comprehension skill in the related literature and most of them aim to render reading process more effective and time-efficient. Strategies like “getting the idea quickly”, “taking notes”, “highlighting”, and “guessing intelligently” covered in this study are all intended to serve this purpose as contributive agents.*

*Even though it can be easily observed that there is an ever-growing body of research on the use meta-cognitive strategies, cognitive and compensation strategies receive much less interest. In order to fill this gap, this study aims to find out whether teaching cognitive and compensation strategies for reading comprehension skill makes a statistically significant difference in the students’ reading performances.*

*The subjects of the study are 60 first-year students attending the ELT program at Ondokuz Mayıs University. 30 students are assigned to the experimental group while the other 30 students are included in the control group. In order to specify the extent to which the treatment process is successful a pre- and post-test for reading comprehension were administered to the subjects. In order to evaluate the reading comprehension level of the students, ten multiple-choice questions, two open ended questions and four true-false questions are addressed to them in the test (pre-post test). The statistical analyses of the study are conducted by means of the SPSS software with statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, frequencies and T-tests. The statistically significance level is accepted as  $p < 0.05$  for the analyses and the related discussions and comments are reported in line with this significance threshold.*

*Unlike the experimental group that receives strategy-based instruction for reading comprehension, the control group receives reading lessons through a traditional approach without any special emphasis on language learning strategies. During the treatment process, which lasts eight weeks (12 lesson hours), the experimental group is trained to use three cognitive strategies and one compensation strategy for*

reading comprehension skill. Oxford's extensive taxonomy constituted the basis for the selection of the strategies to be instructed. The employed cognitive strategies are "getting the idea quickly", "taking notes" and "highlighting" while the only compensation strategy covered in the study is "guessing intelligently".

Although no statistically significant difference is found between the pre- and post-test scores of the students in the two groups, the within-group independent analysis of the pre- and post-test scores of the students in the experimental group indicates a statistically significant progress. Furthermore, the analysis of the pre- and post-test scores of the students included in the control group shows no statistically significant difference. In the light of these findings, it is concluded that using language learning strategies could be of a contributing effect for enhancing reading comprehension skill; and taking the context, scope, and findings of this study into consideration, the following suggestions are presented for future studies and classroom implementations.

The statistically significant progress achieved by the experimental group indicates that strategy-based language teaching should be incorporated into the methodology followed in language classes, particularly in EFL context. It is an undeniable fact that it is not so simple and smooth to ensure the integration of language learning strategies in EFL classes where traditional understandings are rather hard to break. Some of the preceding problems posing difficulty in this regard are the unwillingness of the students accustomed to the dominance of teacher-talk, hardness to break the classical habits of both teachers and learners, limited time and so on. Nevertheless, through organizing the variables like allocated time, strategy selection, student background and so on at an optimum-like level, teachers can observe considerable progress in their students' performances. To this end, it is quite important that ELT departments at the university level adopt an inclusive outlook on the use of language learning strategies and thus help the prospective English language teachers hold an adequate awareness about the significance of strategy-based instruction. Likewise, the English language teachers' awareness in this context should be maximized via well-designed and to-the-point in-service training programs.

**Keywords:** Strategy, Language Learning, Reading Comprehension, Learner Autonomy.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is an indispensable component of language learning. Reading is one of the most significant activities in a language class, since it not only provides a source of information and pleasurable



activity but also helps learners extend and consolidate their knowledge in the target language (Rivers, 1981). Also, it is clear that reading is the fundamental purpose of most EFL learners (Dubin and Bycina, 1991). That is, the primary aim is to attain a desired level of reading skill in most foreign language learning cases, since most EFL learners try to learn a language for instrumental purposes like succeeding in examinations, reading the target literature, getting information for academic studies, and so on.

It is not true to consider reading as a passive activity preventing the learner from actively participating in the process (Rivers, 1981, Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983). On the contrary, it involves the learner in the process by giving him/her roles like analyzing lexical items, syntax and discourse, inferring meanings from context, getting and analyzing the intended messages, and so on. An effective reading process involves “developing competence in the foreign language, awareness of the structure of written texts, and knowledge about the world” (Hedge, 2000: 221). Language learning strategies (henceforth LLSs) aim to combine these three dimensions and yield more efficient readings. An old Chinese proverb says “Give a man fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime” (Griffiths, 2004: 1). As this proverb stresses, solving or helping for the solution of a specific problem may seem pleasant in the short run; however the same problem will arise again in the future and external help will be required continuously. In order to overcome this problem, it is better and more logical to help someone learn how to cope with problems and teach him/her the know-how. In this context, language learning strategies may be useful in helping students become more autonomous and thus develop better skills. The effect of LLS instruction can be measured more tangibly and objectively in reading skill than the other skills. Comprehension level, speed and getting the target item from the text are some of the dimensions of the reading process to which LLSs might serve to a great extent.

There are only few studies investigating the effects of cognitive strategy instruction on reading comprehension. For example, the studies conducted by Tang and Moore (1992), Bedir (1998), Kıröğlü (2002) yielded results to the favour of teaching cognitive LLSs while the studies by O’Malley (1987) and Steinagel (2005) yielded findings in the opposite direction. Most other studies focus on the meta-cognitive dimension in terms of reading comprehension. For instance Çubukçu (2008) and Muhtar (2006) are among the researchers who aimed to identify the correlation between meta-cognitive strategy instruction and success in reading comprehension. While



Çubukçu (2008) reports positive findings, Muhtar (2006) does not report a significant correlation. This study is quite important in that it undertakes a role of contributing to the existing body of literature to reach more concrete opinions as to the role of cognitive strategy instruction in reading comprehension. As Griffiths (2004) says LLSs may not be a magic wand to orient the whole language learning process; however they can be of extreme use eclectically in conjunction with other techniques. Therefore, this study will present a different perspective for using strategies for reading comprehension.

The aim of this study is to reveal whether teaching cognitive and compensation strategies plays a significant role in terms of reading comprehension skill. By evaluating pre-test and post-test results for both the experimental and control groups, the study investigates whether there will be a statistically significant difference between the reading performances of the students who are taught cognitive and compensation strategies for reading comprehension skill and those who are not.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

As a reaction to the behaviorist theory, Noam Chomsky put forward a cognitive approach to language learning in mid-sixties (Griffiths, 2004). He claimed the existence of a Language Acquisition Device in human beings and that behaviorism is far from accounting for the complexities of language learning process. Although Chomsky's theory was directly related with the first language acquisition, it ushered a new era in the field of language teaching/learning (Griffiths, 2004). It was believed that cognitive contributions of a learner to his/her own learning can be of a remarkable value. Thus, notions like "learner autonomy" came under discussion; and the idea that a learner can take the responsibility of his/her own learning began to be embraced. On this point, researchers like Stern (1975) and Rubin (1975) conducted studies to identify the features of good language learners and tried to explain how LLSs could help learning. These studies undertook the pioneer role in LLS research and broadened horizons for the related future theories.

Different taxonomies as to LLSs have been introduced by different scholars so far. In 1975 the article, 'What the "Good Language Learner" Can Teach Us', by Joan Rubin paved the way for further research on language learning strategies (Grenfell and Macaro, 2007). She defined strategies as "the

techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge” and put forward that successful language learners have some distinguishing characteristics like having a strong desire to communicate, willingness to guess when unsure and not being afraid of being wrong or appearing foolish (1975). In 1981, Rubin (124-126) classified language learning strategies as direct and indirect ones. Direct strategies were clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning and practice while the indirect ones were given as creating opportunities for practice and production tricks. A few years after her first classification, Rubin (1987) provided a more extensive point of view and classified language learning strategies under three groups: learning strategies, communication strategies and social strategies.

In 1985, O'Malley *et al.* defined learning strategies as “operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information” and classified them under three categories: meta-cognitive, cognitive and social (p. 23). It can be said that they added the ‘social’ dimension to the taxonomy considering that the cognitive and meta-cognitive categories replaced Rubin’s direct and indirect strategies that constituted her early classification. On the other hand, as one of the outstanding researchers in this field, Stern (1992) divided LLSs into five strategy groups, which are management and planning strategies, cognitive strategies, communicative - experiential strategies, interpersonal strategies and affective strategies. His classification resembles that of Oxford (1990) in that the scopes of the categories overlap notably.

In 1990s, Oxford made outstanding theoretical contributions to this issue. The taxonomy by Oxford is viewed as one of the most comprehensive ones formulated to date (Ellis, 1994). The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, which is a scale used by Oxford to see which learning strategies the learners use to what extent, is one of the most broadly used scales to this end. Oxford (1990) divides language learning strategies into two main groups (Direct and Indirect) and then divides these both groups into three (Direct: memory, cognitive, compensation, Indirect: meta-cognitive, affective, social). Oxford (1990) reports that these strategy groups and the total 62 strategies defined under these groups are all closely linked together and interact with each other resembling direct strategies to a “performer” and indirect ones to a “director”. As a matter of fact, in order to attain a desirable success or conclusion performers and director should cooperate and work with coordination. This performer and director simile shows the close and indispensable inter-relation among different strategy types.

Strategy training is a demanding procedure, not a casual one. Therefore, some preparations and decisions should be made prior to an instruction process. Oxford (1990: 204) suggests an eight-step model for the training of LLSs:

- 1- Determine the learners' needs and the time available.
- 2- Select strategies well.
- 3- Consider integration of strategy training.
- 4- Consider motivational issues.
- 5- Prepare materials and activities.
- 6- Conduct "completely informed training."
- 7- Evaluate the strategy training.
- 8- Revise the strategy training.

The *first step* involves knowing about the features of the learners who will receive the strategy training. Age, proficiency level, background, etc. are all among the factors determining the needs of learners. Along with these factors, the instructor should determine the length of the process well in accordance with the needs of the students and conditions available.

The *second step* is about the selection of strategies. Strategies should be selected in accordance with the needs of students. Instead of using one strategy, a few different but inter-related strategies should be instructed. Instead of teaching only simple or only difficult strategies, both of them should be given in combination (Oxford, 1990: 205). In addition, the use of the selected strategies should be transferrable to future possible tasks.

The *third step* is related with the nature of the instruction. Oxford (1990: 205) says that an integrated approach should be adopted. The integration of the strategy training with the regular language tasks and materials is important in that it allows the learners to see and practice strategies in context, which raises the possibility of long-retention and future transfer.

The *fourth step* involves raising the motivation level of students. Oxford (1990: 206) suggests that teacher give grades for performance with strategies or encourage and convince students about the fruitfulness of using strategies. Besides, in order to enhance motivation, strategies and materials should be selected meticulously in line with the student characteristics.

The *fifth step* about the preparation of materials and activities to be used in training. Teachers may use available materials or they can develop their own materials like practice sheets. While preparing the materials and activities, motivational issues should be taken into consideration and they should be in conformity with the features and requirements of the selected strategies.

The *sixth step* involves the issue whether to follow a direct or embedded instruction process. Oxford (1990: 207) suggests that direct instruction should be employed and learners should be informed about the aim and use of the strategies to be taught. By this way, also meta-cognitive dimension of the training can be fulfilled.

In the *seventh step* both students and the teacher evaluate the instruction process in terms of the performance and progress achieved. Opinions and observations of the students are quite important in this context as they constitute the target.

In the *eighth step* the instructor revises the whole process in the light of the findings yielded in the seventh step and takes decisions about the efficacy of the training and what to change if there appear shortcomings.

It is better to follow these steps in order to attain desired results. If problems occur in any of these steps, the process may be adversely affected. However, with the aid of evaluation and revision phases errors can be compensated thus enabling chances to restructure the training model.

## 2.2 Relevant Studies

In recent years, language learning strategies have attracted much interest in second and foreign language teaching. The studies range from descriptive to experimental ones. While some of them focus on the identification of the particular strategies used by learners, others aim to test the efficacy of using these strategies through conducting an experimental strategy instruction procedure. Considering the bulk of research in this area and the scope of this study, the studies covered here include experimental ones and are introduced in two different categories: studies yielded positive and negative findings as to the use of LLSs.

The first group of researchers have reported findings to the favor of using LLSs. Tang and Moore (1992), for example, carried out a study through teaching cognitive (title discussion, pre-teaching vocabulary) and meta-

cognitive strategies (self-monitoring) for reading comprehension. The results yielded by the research show that both cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies made significant difference in terms of language scores. Likewise, Bedir (1998) conducted a strategy instruction through teaching cognitive learning strategies like skimming-scanning, summarizing, semantic mapping, etc. for reading comprehension. Bedir (1998) reports that there is a significant difference between the performances of the experimental group and the control group following this study with prep-class candidate EFL teachers at Çukurova University. In a parallel study with 2<sup>nd</sup> grade university students, Kiroğlu (2002) taught how to use the reading comprehension strategy, SQ3R (Scan, Question, Read, Recite and Review) and by means of pre-tests and post-tests it was aimed to see how this specific strategy instruction worked to what extent. At the end of the study, Kiroğlu (2002) concludes that there is a significant difference between the reading comprehension levels of students who are given strategy instruction and those who are not.

On the other hand, other studies have not yielded supporting findings as to the use of LLSs. For example, O'Malley (1987) conducted a research with the participation of 75 students to see the effectiveness of language learning strategy instruction. The students were randomly assigned to three different groups. The first group received meta-cognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies training; the second group received cognitive and socio-affective strategies training; the third group received no special strategy training. Listening, speaking and vocabulary skills of the students were addressed in the study. Surprisingly, the control group did better in terms of vocabulary skills following the study. O'Malley (1987) tries to explain this outcome by saying that the students in the experimental groups did not take the instruction seriously enough and continued to use their traditional understandings and techniques. Likewise, having studied on the effects of reading and reading strategy training on lower proficiency level second language learners who were learning Spanish as a second language, Steinagel (2005) reports that there is no significant difference between the performances of those who received strategy training for reading comprehension and those who did not. The chief reason behind this result is given as the limitation of the time allocated for the study. In order to contribute to the existing literature this study focuses on the use of LLSs and aims to find out the extent to which cognitive and compensation strategies are effective in terms of reading comprehension skill.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Population and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of students attending the English Language Teaching (ELT) Program in the Department of Foreign Languages Education at Ondokuz Mayıs University. The sample of the study was selected from the first grade students attending the same program. For the reason that the aim of the study was to reveal the role of teaching cognitive and compensation strategies in the success of university students in reading comprehension, the first grade course titled “Advanced Reading and Writing” was deemed as ideal for this application process. Therefore, the sample for the study was selected as the first-grade students attending the English Language Teaching Program. Both the experimental group and the control group were composed of 30 students.

#### 3.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

A pre- and post-test for reading comprehension were administered to the subjects in order to specify the efficacy level of the LLS instruction. In order to evaluate the comprehension level of the students, ten multiple-choice questions, two open ended questions and four true-false questions were asked to them in the test (pre-post test). The questions were prepared by the researcher taking the level of the students and scope of the strategy instruction process into account. The existence of open-ended and true-false questions oriented the researcher to seek expert opinion for the instrument in terms of reliability and validity. The questions along with the text itself were broached to ten instructors from the ELT Department at Ondokuz Mayıs University and their constructive recommendations and final approval were taken as the basis before putting it into practice.

The findings of the study have been shaped through utilizing only quantitative data gathered from pre- and post-test results. To this end, the statistical analyses of the study were carried out by means of statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, frequencies and T-tests. While conducting statistical analyses, the threshold for significance was accepted as  $p < 0.05$  and discussions and comments on the findings of the study were shaped in accordance with this significance threshold.

#### 3.3 Procedure



Three main cognitive strategies and one compensation strategy (mentioned below) were instructed to the experimental group under the framework of this research. In general terms, a two-week period was allocated to each strategy making up an eight-week strategy instruction process in total. The first weeks of these two-week periods for each strategy were allocated to introduce the strategies to the students and show them examples of making use of these strategies effectively. These lessons were planned and delivered with the intention of laying a background knowledge and awareness about the strategies to be instructed. These model strategy applications were conducted with active participation of the students in order to pave the way for them to become autonomous strategy users. On the other hand, the second weeks of the two-week periods were utilized so as to show students a more detailed picture about the strategies in question and let them have an opportunity to practice these strategies on the texts selected for the study.

While selecting the strategies to be instructed, Oxford's classification was taken as the basis. The researcher, supervisor and experienced reading-writing instructors of the department determined which strategies to be instructed taking the aim of the lesson and level of the students into consideration. The instructed strategies are among those labeled by Oxford (1990) as suitable for enhancing reading comprehension skill. The employed cognitive strategies were "getting the idea quickly", "taking notes" and "highlighting". As for the instructed compensation strategy, Oxford (1990: 92-93) titles it as "guessing intelligently". Although Oxford (1990: 92) lists two different strategies (using linguistic clues and using other clues) under this strategy type, they were regarded by the researcher as inseparable steps. Therefore, they were taught together with a holistic approach under the title "guessing intelligently" as a single strategy.

The texts used during the strategy instruction were selected from a course book titled as "Creating Meaning" (Blass et. al., 2008). Six reading passages (Changing the Definition, James, Innovations for the Developing World, Finding a New Way to Paint, Frank Gehry, Global Warming) included in the first three chapters of the book were covered in the treatment process. Actually, as the instruction was conducted under the course "Advanced Reading and Writing", the students were asked to purchase this book prior to the beginning of lessons. Then, both sample strategy practices provided by the researcher and the strategy practices expected from the students were handled with the use of these texts covered in "Creating Meaning".

#### 4. RESULTS

The aim of this study is to show the extent to which the strategy training process turns out to be effective. To this end the post-test scores of the experimental group and control group are statistically analyzed in the first phase. The related table is given below:

**Table 1:** Comparison of the Post-test Scores of the Experimental Group and Control Group

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	t	Significance
Experimental	65,73	30	13,68	1,151	,254
Control	61,33	30	15,84		

The analysis of the post-test scores of the experimental group and control group indicate that there is not a statistically significant difference ( $p>0,05$ ). This finding is contrary to the expectations of the researcher. As it is clear in the above table, the experimental group outperformed the control group in the post-test; however, it is not adequate to exceed the significance threshold.

The finding that there is not a statistically significant difference between pre- and post-test results of the two groups directed the researcher to analyze the within-group statistics. To this end, t-test was applied for the pre- and post-test scores of the experimental group and then the control group. The findings as to the experimental group are given in the following table:

**Table 2:** Comparison of the Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Experimental Group

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	t	Significance
Pre-test	58,23	30	17,13	3,445	,002
Post-test	65,73	30	13,68		

The analysis of the pre and post-test scores of the experimental group shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performances of the students included in the experimental group ( $p<0,05$ ). This finding conforms to the expectations of the researcher. It shows a significant difference in terms of the progress achieved by the experimental students during the strategy training process. As Oxford (1990) and Griffiths (2004) point out, LLSs can serve as an effective tool in the context of language learning. Under the framework of this study, cognitive and compensation strategies appear to be effective in terms of reading comprehension. In a similar direction, Tang and Moore (1992), Bedir (1998) and Kiroğlu (2002) put a strong emphasis on the integration of LLSs into reading lessons. Thus, it becomes apparent that the LLS training has certain advantages in the language learning process and the importance of using LLSs should be taken into consideration.

Besides the experimental group, the findings as to the control group are also important in that they make the scene clearer in view of the efficacy of LLS training process. Therefore, the within-group statistics of the control group are covered in this paper and the related table is as follows:

**Table 3:** Comparison of the Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Control Group

	Mean	N	St. Deviation	t	Significance
Pre-test	57,40	30	16,84		
				1,986	,057
Post-test	61,33	30	15,84		

The statistical analysis of the pre- and post-test scores of the control group shows that there is not a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performances of the students who were listed in the control group ( $p>0,05$ ). However, the significance level “0,057” suggests that it is really close to the 0,05 threshold. This attests to a certain amount of progress that was achieved by the control group students during the strategy instruction period, although it does not turn out to be statistically significant. It is quite normal to observe a progress in these students, as they were exposed to several reading texts during the process and the practices made in the class produced an increase in their scores. However,



the lack of LLSs had a hindering effect on attaining statistically significant results in the control group. Even solely this finding suggests the efficacy and importance of employing LLSs. This finding is similar to that of Muhtar's (2006) study, in which she taught meta-cognitive strategies for reading comprehension. Muhtar (2006) reports a statistically significant progress in the experimental group; however, the within-group analyses of the control group yield no significant progress.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that using LLSs for reading comprehension can help ELT students at Ondokuz Mayıs University attain a better level in terms of comprehension. The study also indicates that language learning strategies should be integrated into regular methodology employed in language classes, especially in EFL classes. It is not a smooth and easy process to integrate and employ LLSs in EFL classes. Factors like the problems with the unwillingness of the students, hardness to break old habits of both teachers and students, limited time, and so on all render it more difficult to apply LLSs properly in EFL classes. However, through organizing the variables like time, strategy selection, student background, and so on efficiently, we believe that letting and teaching ELT students to use LLSs can bring better performances.

In the light of the findings yielded by this study, the researcher concludes that using LLSs can be highly effective for reading comprehension and thus for language learning in the ELT Department at Ondokuz Mayıs University. This point is supported by the results as to the progress achieved by the experimental group during the instruction process (Table 1). Therefore, the teachers and prospective teachers of English should be made aware of the importance of LLSs. Prospective English language teachers should be educated about LLS use in universities and the already English language teachers' awareness in this context should be enhanced through in-service training programs to be initiated by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with universities.

In summary, the point of departure for this study was to see whether it was useful to employ LLSs for reading comprehension. The findings obtained via this study are believed to constitute a constructive and contributive dimension for employing LLSs for reading comprehension and, in broader sense, for language learning. It is thought that the integration of the LLSs into EFL classes can bring out desired results in terms of the progress made

by the learners. It is therefore important that ELT departments in universities adopt an inclusive point of view as to LLSs and help the prospective EFL teachers have an adequate awareness about the significance and use of strategy-based instruction.

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