



A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE USE OF SUMMARIZING STRATEGIES IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

İLKÖĞRETİMDE ÖZETLEME STRATEJİLERİNİN KULLANIMINA İLİŞKİN NİTEL BİR ARAŞTIRMA

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ABSTRACT: The objective of this study is to reveal how well summarizing strategies are used by Grade 4 and Grade 5 students as a reading comprehension strategy. This study was conducted in Buca, İzmir and the document analysis method, a qualitative research strategy, was employed. The study used a text titled “Environmental Pollution” and an “Evaluation Criteria Form”. The maximum sampling method was used to obtain data from 246 students from 6 different schools. The first language of the participants in the sample was Turkish. Students were asked to summarize the text “Environmental Pollution” and their summarizing strategies were evaluated. The summaries were then assessed and codified as follows: surface summarizing, relating to the subject and writing the very same text again, paraphrasing the main idea, diverging from the main idea, and missing the main idea. In general we found that students made insufficient use of summarizing strategies.

Keywords: Summarizing Strategies, Primary Schools, Students, Qualitative Research

ÖZET: Bu çalışmanın amacı, ilköğretim 4. ve 5 sınıflarda, okuduğunu anlama stratejisi olarak özetleme stratejisinin nasıl kullanıldığına ortaya konulmasıdır. İzmir/Buca’da yapılan çalışmada, nitel araştırma stratejisinde kullanılan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada, “Çevre Kirliliği” isimli metin ve “Değerlendirme Kriterleri Formu” kullanılmıştır. Yapılan maksimum örnekleme sonucunda, altı ayrı okulda, toplam 246 öğrenci veri kaynağı olarak alınmıştır. Örnekleme oluşturan deneklerin ana dili Türkçedir. Öğrencilere, “Çevre Kirliliği” metninin Türkçe özeti çıkarılarak, “özetleme stratejilerini kullanma düzeyleri değerlendirilmiştir. Verilerin analizinde “yüzeysel özetleme, konu ile ilişki kurma, metnin aynısını yazma, ana düşüncüyü kendi cümleleriyle yazma, ana düşünceden uzaklaşma ve ana düşüncüyü hiç belirtmeme” kodlarına ulaşılmıştır. Öğrencilerin yaptığı özetler genel olarak incelendiğinde özetleme stratejilerinin yeterince iyi kullanılmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Özetleme Stratejileri, İlköğretim, Öğrenci, Nitel Araştırma.

1. INTRODUCTION

Simply understanding the meaning of words is insufficient for reading comprehension. In order to ensure comprehension, a good reader must be able to perform applications such as relating the text with his own life, summarizing the information, drawing a conclusion, and asking questions about the text efficiently (Keer & Verhaeghe, 2005; Allen, 2003). Recent studies indicated that good readers employ various mental strategies and undergo “a constructive process”. A reader’s self regulation skills and active participation in his own learning process affect both his reading comprehension and his learning significantly (Keer & Verhaeghe 2005; Wormeli, 2004; Allen 2003; Harvey & Goodvis 2002; Senemoğlu, 2001) During the task of comprehension, a learner’s application of learning strategies and their meaningful usage is very important. As is known, reading comprehension strategies generally fall under three categories. They are; 1) Pre-reading strategies 2) During-reading strategies 3) Post-reading strategies (<http://www.ncsd.k12.pa.us/pssa/Reading/rihnd20a.htm>). Summarizing strategy is among the important post-reading strategies.

“Summarizing helps students make meaning out of information and store it in his long term memory efficiently. Summarizing causes students to; a) Read for comprehension b) discriminate the important ideas c) put the information in his own words” (Senemoğlu, 569, p. 2001). These allow students to make meaning of the text. Obtaining the meaning of words in a simple way is inadequate

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to the task of summarizing a text. In order to summarize a text, one of the prerequisites is to read it carefully. This requires a student to employ various mental skills efficiently. "In order to make a good summary, a student must be able to relate new ideas with old ones and put unique ideas forward (Friend, 2001, p. 320).

Summarizing is a difficult skill for students as it requires that; a) a summary must be short, b) a summary must include the writer's most important ideas, c) a summary must be written in students' own words, and d) a summary must include the information that students need to study (Friend, 2001, p. 320). Teachers may need to be given training on summary writing in order to teach students how to summarize a text as well as to improve the quality of students' summaries. When learning how to write a summary, a student must follow these steps; 1) to spot the major idea and the supporting ideas of each paragraph in the text, 2) to spot the most important paragraph in the text, 3) to spot the main idea of the text in general, 4) to use his own words by referring to the concepts and ideas in the text while writing a summary (Wormeli 2004; Garcia & Michaelis, 2001).

With greater emphasis being placed on the importance of reading comprehension strategies, we have seen a number of recent studies on the subject of training students summarize their reading. Hamman (1995) looked into the effects of strategy training on students' success and summarizing strategies were among the strategies taught. The study was conducted with 14 participants over a period of 4 weeks. During the study, students worked on strategies like summarizing, spotting the main idea, ruling out the wrong main ideas as well as improving their guessing strategies. While teaching these strategies, Palincsar and Brown's (1984) reciprocal teaching method was employed. Also a pre-test and a post-test were given. As a result of the study, an improvement which would make a significant difference in students' reading comprehension was observed. Hess (2004) conducted a study on elementary school students and evaluated their metacognitive reading strategies, especially summarizing and explaining strategies under the framework of "Success for All Reading Wing Program". The study was conducted in an elementary school in North California with five teachers of Grade 4 and Grade 5 and their students. A "Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS)" which measures the teachers' own ideas and applications on how to teach reading was used and a comprehensive observation was conducted while students were using summarizing and explaining strategies. Cooperative Learning and Reciprocal teaching methods were used for training purposes. During a ten week study, it was observed that students improved on usage of metacognitive strategies, especially summarizing and explanation strategies.

Students need certain physical processes and thinking processes in order to understand a text. Constructivism emphasizes the importance of learners' assuming responsibility of their own learning as well as their active participation in their learning process. For example, determining the main idea and supporting ideas of a text, putting the whole text into new words (paraphrasing), connecting new ideas with the old ones and putting original ideas forward are some of them. This is a constructive process which requires the employment of meta cognitive strategies. Thus summarizing is a strategy that activates the thinking process. Furthermore, the proper employment of summarizing strategies is known to enhance the quality of education. In light of these findings, this study aims to evaluate how effective summarizing strategies are used as a reading comprehension strategy by elementary school grade 4 and grade 5 students. This study set out to establish; 1) how students express supporting ideas in their summaries, and 2) how they express the main idea in their summaries.

2. METHOD

This study employed the document analysis method which is a qualitative research strategy. In the document analysis method, written materials which include information about the phenomenon or phenomena that researchers want to investigate are analyzed (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2008; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The study was conducted in Grade 4 and Grade 5 of Elementary Schools. Students were asked to summarize a text titled "Environmental Pollution (see Attachment 1)" (Demirci, 2003, p. 88). Whether students used summarizing strategies effectively or not were checked in the summaries.

2. 1. Participants

The population of the research includes all Grade 4 and Grade 5 students of state elementary schools in Buca, Izmir. In order to obtain students' summaries, a "Maximum Diversity Sampling" method was used. The aim of the Maximum Diversity Sampling method is to reflect the diversity in the experiment group in the maximum way (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2005; Maxwell 1996; Patton, 1990). In this method, elementary schools in Buca were categorized as upper, middle and lower socio-economic income schools with two schools in each category, a total of 6 schools were selected. One Grade 4 and one Grade 5 class was selected from each school via random sampling method and students were asked to summarize a previously determined text. Data was obtained from a total of 246 students and analyzed for the purposes of answering the qualitative sub problems of this research. 246 summaries were evaluated as the qualitative data set.

2. 2. Research Instruments

A suitable text titled "Environmental Pollution" and an "Evaluation Criteria Form" were used to check whether students employed summarizing strategies effectively or not. 2 class teachers and 2 university instructors decided together whether the text was suitable to a students' level as well as if it could be summarized in one class hour or not. The evaluation criteria form was constructed in accordance with the text in order to evaluate the students' summaries in detail. Each criteria and points to be assigned to each criterion were initially determined by the researchers and then opened to the discussion of 8 university instructors from different departments and two grade school teachers. After their evaluation, 4 criteria and the points assigned to each criterion (all together 100 points) were used in the "Evaluation Criteria Form". The criteria decided are as follows:

The First Criteria (30 points): Determining the unimportant information and taking it out. Listing the important ideas (5 different important ideas take place in the text).

The Second Criteria (30 points): Deciding on the main idea of the text and putting it in their own words, i.e. paraphrasing it.

The Third Criteria (30 points): Deciding on the most important idea of each paragraph (i.e. supporting ideas) and paraphrasing it (there are six paragraphs in the text).

The Fourth Criteria (10 points): To connect the relationships between the main idea of the text with the supporting ideas in each paragraph in a very short manner without changing their meaning. (The most important idea of each paragraph was already graded in the 3rd criteria. Students who can relate the main idea with the other major ideas in a suitable manner are given full points in regard to the 4th criteria).

The researchers had the students summarize the text. Before the actual summary writing, the students were invited to speak about environmental pollution in order to activate their background information. After that, the students were asked to read the text silently. It was read aloud once both by the researcher and the students, and students were asked whether it was understood or not. After the text was understood by the students, they were asked to summarize it.

2. 3. Data Analysis

First, the summaries written by each student were numbered and put into an order. Each summary was read and assessed by the researchers separately 4 times in terms of the evaluation criteria. The consistency of points given to each criterion by the researchers was checked. Two sample evaluations of student summaries are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Two Sample Evaluations of Two Students' Summaries

Student number	Criteria	1st Assessor's grade	2nd Assessor's Grade
Student 57	1 st criteria	6+6+6=18	6+6+6=18
	2 nd criteria	10	15
	3 rd criteria	5+5+5=15	5+5+5=15
	4 th criteria	5	5
	Total	48	53
Student 57	1 st criteria	6+6+6+6=24	6+6+6+6=24
	2 nd criteria	0	0
	3 rd criteria	5+5+5+5=20	5+5+5+5=20
	4 th criteria	3	5
	Total	47	49

The consistency coefficients for all criteria are as follows; .76 for the first criteria; .83 for the second criteria; .86 for the third criteria and .77 for the fourth criteria. This kind of assessment contributed significantly to both the reliability and validity of the qualitative data and the way the codes were constructed. While the summaries were being read, the codes were suggested and when these codes were seen together their common points were determined. In this way, the main categories that make up the research findings were determined. The codes under the determined categories were commented on in relation to each other and the results of the research were revealed. The findings of the researchers were then assembled along with examples to illustrate the variety of summarizing strategies used by the students.

3. FINDINGS

When the student summaries were considered in terms of the first sub problem, "How did students express the most important idea of each paragraph in their summaries?" under the category of "determination of main ideas", the codes "surface summarizing, relating to the subject and writing the very same text again" were used. Some findings from the above mentioned codes were listed below along with some quotations from the summaries.

When the summaries were researched in terms of the category of "determination of main ideas" and the code "surface summarizing", a large number of students was found to have summarized the whole text with a few sentences. Following are some sample summaries:

"Schools declare holidays. There are a lot of people who moved away from cities because of environmental pollution. Such an important environmental problem must be solved. Everybody must be made aware of the importance of the environment and must gain love for it." [Girl, 5th Grade]

"Environmental pollution has begun to become a problem recently. Such an important environmental problem must be solved. We must work on to keep the environment clean and green. We can be happy in such an environment." [Boy, 5th Grade]

Students who summarized the whole text with a couple of sentences in a surface manner were found that they were unable to use summarizing strategies as needed. Of course, summaries must be short, but summaries shorter than the required length are inadequate. While summarizing, important ideas must be listed, the main idea was to be determined, the main idea and the supporting ideas must be linked with each other and the main concepts that took place in the text must be stated. With that in mind, some students fell short in determining the main idea of the text as well as determining the supporting points.

Some interesting findings arose when student summaries were investigated for the category “determination of the main points”, the code of “relating to the subject”. Some parts of the summaries were about environmental pollution and yet they were far from determining and stating the text’s main points about the environmental problems mentioned in the text. Some quotations from this code are as follows:

“(…) We have to throw garbage into the garbage can in order to prevent environmental pollution. Our seas have been polluted and this created the environmental pollution. (…)” [Boy, 4th Grade]

“(…) Garbage thrown by people smells bad. They look bad. There is air pollution and water pollution as environmental pollution. (…)” [Boy, 4th Grade]

“(…) It is warm in January. The reason of this is environmental pollution. Animals may extinct if we don’t prevent environmental pollution. Such environmental problems must be solved immediately. We must buy empty land and plant trees. (…)” [Girl, 5th Grade]

“(…) The noses of dogs are very sensitive. If we pollute the environment we can harm dogs’ sense of smell. If we cut trees and make houses in those areas we may cause environmental pollution.” (…)

While making a summary, relations among the text’s main concepts and ideas must be established. At the same time, the connection between the subject and the main ideas must not be broken. Nevertheless, many students wrote about ideas and situations which fell far from the text as seen from the quotations. Some summaries that were unrelated with the text were written. From that respect, it can be said that students were not able to link the subject of the text with its main ideas.

When student summaries were investigated in terms of the category “determining the important ideas” and the code “rewriting the very same text”, some important problems were observed. Students’ summaries revealed that students either rewrote the text as a whole or they skipped only a few sentences and rewrote the rest. Some sample quotations from student summaries are as follows:

“(…) Environmental pollution has begun to become a problem recently. This subject has never been out of agenda in Turkey as well as in the world. Newspapers often made news of this subject. Radios and televisions continuously aired about this subject. They brought the most frightening scenes to us. The reasons and the solutions of environmental pollution have still been discussed.” (…)

“(…) In big cities traffic accidents, air pollution and water and sewage problems are among the factors that make the environment unlivable. Such an important environmental problem must be solved. Several precautions have been taken to guarantee a livable environment by state and environmental non-governmental organizations.” (…)

The second sub problem of the research is “How did students express the main idea in their summaries?” When students’ summaries were researched in terms of this sub problem, the category of “determining the main idea” included the codes “rewriting the main idea in students’ own words, staying away from the main idea, and not stating the main idea at all.”

When the student summaries were studied in terms of the code “rewriting the main idea in students’ own words” two situations emerged. The first was that students wrote the main idea paragraph of the text as a whole. The second was that students wrote the main idea that was emphasized in the conclusion paragraph by changing only a few words of it. However, the main idea must be expressed in students’ own words without its meaning being changed. Sample quotations from students’ views about the main idea are as follows:

“(…) Today, we must support the precautions taken against the environmental pollution. We must work on to keep the environment clean and green. Because, we can only rest and be happy in a

clean and green environment. We can only breathe fresh air and stay healthy in such an environment.” (...) [Boy, 5th Grade]. The student copied the same main idea from the text.

“(…) We must support the precautions taken against the environmental pollution. We must work on to keep the environment clean and green. Because, we can only rest and be happy in a clean and green environment.” (...) [Girl, 5th Grade]. In this quote, the student preferred to summarize the main idea paragraph by only changing a few words.

As known, while writing a summary, the main idea of the text must be expressed in students' own words. However, some students expressed the main idea either by copying it from the text or by changing only a few words of it. Therefore, it can be said that the majority of students fell short in expressing the main idea in their own words.

When student summaries were investigated in terms of the category “determining the main idea” and the code “falling far from the main idea”, some heartbreaking situations were observed. While the students were writing the main idea paragraph, they mentioned some situations that were not related to the text. At the beginning, some sentences related to the main idea were written but later on students wrote about situations that were not related to it. Below are the related quotations:

“(…) We must support all the precautions taken against the environmental pollution. We must prevent migration to the cities. We mustn't leave the towns and villages.” (...) [Boy, 5th Grade]. When the main idea paragraph in the text was analyzed, it was stated that the precautions must be supported. However, the text did not make any mention of migration. As the quotation shows, the student moved away from the framework of the main idea.

“(…)We must take precautions against the environmental pollution. We must plant grass. Grass not only makes the environment look beautiful but also cause us to breathe fresh air.” (...) [Boy, 5th Grade]. Similar to the previous quotation, at the beginning, some sentences about the main idea were written but later on students wrote about issues that were not part of the main idea. As seen, there is nothing about grass in the text. As can be seen from these quotations, students were not able to explain the main idea. While they were trying to explain the supporting ideas, the moved away from the main idea.

When the student summaries were investigated in terms of the code “never stating the main idea” it was observed that some students never mentioned the main idea. The main idea was explicitly stated at the end of the text given to the students. However, many students did not pay attention to this paragraph and wrote their summaries without it. Even though the supporting ideas were included in their summaries, the students did not mention the main idea. In light of this finding, it can be said that the students were unable to determine the main idea.

4. DISCUSSION

As in other studies, a literature survey was conducted before and during the study. However, no research has been found that reveals how efficiently students' summaries were written based on an analysis of their written materials. From this perspective, this study is unique.

Our analysis of written products in terms of their surface summarizing coding, shows that students were seen to have written very short summaries from time to time. In some instances the whole text was written in a few sentences. A summary is supposed to be short; however, a summary which fails to state the main points of a text is inadequate. Such cases can be explained as students' being indifferent to writing a good summary, or their desire to select the shortest way to write about the text. Of course this does not stem solely from the students. Teachers also seem not to emphasize summarizing strategy usage adequately. Further, teachers seem not to be equipped enough in this topic. Naturally, a summarizing process where teachers fail to guide their students is not valued by students.

When the summaries were evaluated in terms of the code “relating to the subject”, students were found to wander from the text's main concepts and ideas. They therefore produced summaries which were not related to the subject. While summarizing, students must naturally use their own sentences.

However, this should not require them to forego the subject of the text and its main ideas. In light of the data collected, some students can be said to have difficulties in understanding the subject and writing about it.

When the summaries were researched in terms of the code “rewriting the very text” several serious problems were identified. Students either wrote the exact text or skipped a few words and then wrote the text. That is, a student avoided reading the text, thinking about it and the expressing the text in his own words. A student’s thinking process cannot develop unless he employs a “constructive process” in his mind. At this point, we can say that some students were not mentally active while writing their summaries.

When the summaries were evaluated in terms of the code “expressing the main idea into students’ own words” some deficiencies were observed. The majority of the students were unable to express the main idea paragraph which was very visible and was placed at the end of the text. The main idea was either copied from the text or was not written at all. In fact, the presence of the main idea is a clear indication of the fact that the students understood the text. In this case, the students fell short of understanding the main idea of the text.

A student who can use the summarizing strategies skillfully should be able to determine which points are the details and which points are the main points of the text and to spot the main idea of the text and express it in his own words, to spot the supporting ideas of each paragraph and similarly, put them into his own words. In short, he should be active while he is learning. A reader who can put all these applications into practice can also develop higher level thinking skills. Consequently, the training of summary writing strategies is always important.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Data about the “surface summarizing” code showed that the students used rather short summaries. Naturally, summaries are expected to be short but unnecessarily short student summaries may also show that they have difficulty expressing the text or do not spend enough time on writing the summary. Analyzed in terms of “relating to the subject”, student summaries were found not to appropriately capture the main concepts and ideas of the text. The students have difficulty identifying the main concepts of the text to be summarized.

The evaluation of the code “relating to the subject” showed that students expressed rather different opinions than the main concepts and ideas mentioned in the text. It is essential that students write the text in their own sentences. However, diverting from the subject shows that they do not fully understand the text, and they have reading comprehension problems.

Students were found to copy the original text at times. This may also mean that students have difficulty understanding the text or find it unimportant to do so.

When the summaries were evaluated in terms of the code “rewriting the main idea in students’ own words”, it was found that the main idea paragraph at the end of the text was not expressed properly. It may thus be concluded that the students were not competent in identifying the main idea of the text. This competence indeed lies at the heart of text comprehension.

These results corroborate those of previous related research. In a similar study conducted with university students, Susar Kırmızı and Akkaya (2009) concluded that students were good at identifying the main idea but included irrelevant examples in their summaries. Student summaries were also as short as possible. This reveals students’ typical summarizing habits ever since elementary school. This may be an indicator that the teaching of summarizing strategies is not properly valued at schools. In a study on preservice English teachers’ summary strategy use preferences, Deneme (2009) showed that their preferences were not successful and they did not use certain essential strategies such as “writing the summary by taking into consideration the style of the original text”, “taking notes from the original text and using these in the summary”, “reflecting the main idea of the original text in the right place in the summary”, “writing summaries of the proper length”, and “writing the summary in their own words”. However, it was found that the entire student body that was studied used other necessary summarizing strategies such as “selecting important information

from the original text and incorporating it in the summary” and “achieving unity in the summary by using proper transitions between sentences”. Overall, it was concluded that students used summarizing activities inadequately.

When the student summaries in the present study were analyzed in general, it can be said that summarizing strategies were not sufficiently employed. Students failed to succeed in determining the main idea and the supporting ideas. This result can be an indication of the fact that training for summary writing strategies is not given effectively at schools. In fact, using summarizing strategies effectively require students’ comprehending the text well. The most important point in using summarizing strategies is that students must understand the text very well in order to summarize it. Generally, students were not particularly successful at doing this. The usage of summarizing strategies requires the student to focus on the process and the product, as well as his active participation. This “constructive process” enables students to learn the text meaningfully. Many previous studies have shown that the usage of summarizing strategies increases success (Tok & Beyazit 2007, Temizkan 2007; Oluk & Başoñcül 2009; Akkaya 2011). Unfortunately, our analysis of the students’ summaries indicated that the “constructive process” and “meaningful learning” has not sufficiently taken place. Using summarizing strategies, which is at the same time a reading comprehension strategy, would increase students’ academic achievement.

Following our research we suggest that elementary school teachers should receive special training on how to use and teach summarizing strategies. From time to time teachers should allocate time to teach summarizing strategies in class. Student summaries should be evaluated in detail in terms of summarizing strategies. Teachers who evaluate student summaries must definitely give feedback to students. This should be a topic particularly in elementary teacher education. A student who makes a summary should be able to develop his thinking processes at the same time.

Data from the present study have shown that students were not trained in summary strategies. By incorporating such training in the curriculum, student skills in summarizing can be improved. Summarizing is a complex and difficult skill that requires higher level cognition. Thus modern instructional methods and techniques should be used in teaching it. The use of summarizing strategies may be studied in different fields with a bigger number of students. The results of these studies should be shared with the Ministry of Education.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Okuduğunu anlamak için kelimelerdeki anlamı basit bir şekilde yakalamak yeterli değildir. Etkili bir okuyucu anlayarak okumayı başarmak için, metinle kendi yaşantısını ilişkilendirebilme, bilgiyi özetleyebilme, sonuç çıkarma, metne yönelik sorular oluşturma gibi uygulamaları etkin bir şekilde yapabilmelidir. Özetleme, öğrencinin bilgiyi anlamlandırmasına ve uzun süreli belleğe anlamlı olarak yerleştirmesine yardım etmektedir. Çünkü özetleme öğrenciyi; a) anlamak için okumaya, b) önemli fikirleri ayırt etmeye, c) bilgiyi kendi sözcükleriyle ifade etmeye yönlendirmektedir. Özet yapmak için, cümlelerdeki anlamı basit bir şekilde yakalamak yeterli değildir. Metnin anlaşılır bir şekilde okunması önemli önceliklerden birisidir. Bu da zihinsel becerilerinde etkin bir şekilde kullanılmasını gerektirir. İyi bir özet yapabilmek için öğrenci, yeni düşüncelerle öncekiler arasında ilişki kurmalı ve özgün düşünceler ortaya koyabilmelidir.

Öğrenciler, bir metni anlamak için belirli davranışsal ve düşünsel süreçlere gereksinim duyarlar. Yapısal yaklaşım, öğrenen bireyin, öğrenme sorumluluğunu üstlenmesi ve öğrenme sürecine etkin olarak katılması gereği üzerine önemle eğilmektedirler. Örneğin; bir okuma metninin ana düşüncesini ve temel düşüncelerini bulmak, metni yeni cümlelerle ifade etmek, eski bilgilerle yeni bilgileri birleştirmek, özgün düşünceler ortaya koymak gibi. Bu durum, metacognitive stratejilerin kullanılmasını gerektiren yapılandırmacı bir süreçtir. Bu stratejinin en iyi şekilde kullanılması eğitim sürecinin niteliğini de artıracaktır. Bu düşünceler ışığında, bu araştırma ile ilköğretim 4. ve 5. sınıflarda, okuduğunu anlama stratejisi olarak özetleme stratejisinin, ne kadar nitelikli kullanıldığının değerlendirilmesi amaçlanmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, nitel araştırma stratejisinde kullanılan doküman analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Doküman incelemesi, araştırılması hedeflenen olgu ya olgular hakkında bilgi içeren yazılı materyallerin analizini kapsamaktadır Çalışma İlköğretim okullarının 4. ve 5. sınıflarında yapılmıştır. Öğrencilere “Çevre Kirliliği” metninin özeti çıkarılmıştır. Öğrenciler tarafından yapılan özetlerde “özetleme stratejilerinin” nitelikli bir şekilde kullanılıp kullanılmadığı araştırılmıştır.

Araştırmanın evreni İzmir/Buca’da bulunan tüm resmi ilköğretim okullarının 4. ve 5. sınıflarından oluşmaktadır. Öğrencilerin yazdığı özetlere ulaşabilmek için “Maksimum Çeşitlilik Örnekleme” kullanılmıştır. Yapılan maksimum örnekleme sonucunda, araştırmanın nitel alt problemlerini yanıtlamak amacıyla toplam 246 öğrenci veri kaynağı olarak alınmıştır. Öğrencilerin yazdığı 246 özet, nitel veri seti olarak değerlendirmeye alınmıştır.

Özetleme stratejilerinin nitelikli bir şekilde kullanılıp kullanılmadığını araştırmak için yapılan araştırmada öğrencinin yaş özelliklerine uygun olan “Çevre Kirliliği” isimli metin ve “Değerlendirme Kriterleri Formu” kullanılmıştır. Değerlendirme Kriterleri Formu toplam yüz puan üzerinden değerlendirilen dört kriteri içermektedir. Belirlenen değerlendirme kriterleri şunlardır:

1. Kriter (30 puan): Metindeki önemsiz bilgiyi tanıma ve çıkarma. Önemli olanları listeleme (Metinde beş ayrı önemli fikir olduğu tespit edilmiştir.).
2. Kriter (30 puan): Metindeki ana düşüncüyü belirleme ve kendi sözcükleriyle ifade etme.
3. Kriter (30 puan): Her paragraftaki en temel düşüncüyü (metnin yan düşünceleri) seçme ve yeniden ifade etme (Metinde altı paragraf bulunmaktadır.).
4. Kriter (10 puan): Metnin ana düşüncesi ve yan düşünceleri arasındaki ilişkileri anlamını bozmadan çok kısa olarak bütünleştirme.

“Özetlerde öğrenciler, önemli düşünceleri (yan düşünceleri) nasıl ortaya koymuştur?” şeklinde ifade edilen birinci alt problem çerçevesinde yazılan özetler incelendiğinde “önemli düşüncelerin (yan düşünceler) belirlenmesi” temasını oluşturan; “yüzeysel özetleme, konu ile ilişki kurma ve metnin aynısını yazma” kodlarına ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmanın ikinci alt problemi “Öğrenciler özetlerde, ana düşüncüyü nasıl ortaya koymuştur?” şeklinde belirtilmiştir. Bu alt probleme ilişkin olarak özetler incelendiğinde “ana düşüncüyü belirleme temasını” oluşturan “ana düşüncüyü kendi cümleleriyle yazma, ana düşünceden uzaklaşma ve ana düşüncüyü hiç belirtmeme” kodlarına ulaşılmıştır.

Tüm metni yalnızca birkaç cümle ile oldukça yüzeysel bir şekilde anlatan öğrencilerin özetleme stratejilerini gerektiği gibi kullanmadıkları görülmektedir. Elbette özetin kısa olması gerekir ancak gereğinden kısa bir şekilde yapılan özetleme de doğru değildir. Özet yapılırken önemli düşüncelerin listelenmesi, ana düşüncenin belirlenmesi, ana düşünceyle yan düşünce arasında bağlantılar kurulması ve metinde geçen temel kavramlara yer verilmesi gerekmektedir.

Özetlerin bir kısmı metinde yer alan temel kavram ve düşüncelerden tamamen uzaktır. Özet yapılırken metnin temel kavram ve düşünceleriyle bağlantı kurulmalıdır. Aynı zamanda konu ile önemli fikirler arasındaki bağ da koparılmamalıdır. Elde edilen özetler incelendiğinde birçok öğrencinin metnin içeriğinden tamamen uzak düşünce ve durumlardan söz ettiği görülmektedir. Bu yönüyle öğrencilerin özet yazarken metnin konusu ve temel kavramları arasında, ilişki kurma konusunda yeterince başarılı olamadıkları söylenebilir.

Yapılan özetlerde öğrencilerin ya metnin birebir aynısını ya da birkaç cümle atlayarak aynısını yazdıkları tespit edilmiştir. Öğrencilerin büyük bir çoğunluğu metni kendi cümleleri ile ifade etmekten kaçınmışlardır. Özetleme stratejilerini kullanmaktan uzak bir anlayış ile hareket etmiş, özete herhangi bir katkı getirmemişlerdir.

Öğrencilerin metinde yer alan ana fikri belirleme ve ifade etmede de zorlandıkları tespit edilmiştir. Öğrenciler ya metinde geçen ana fikir paragrafının aynısını yazma, ya da metnin sonunda vurgulu bir şekilde yer alan ana düşüncenin birkaç kelimesinin değiştirilerek yazma gibi bir eğilim göstermişlerdir. Oysa ana düşünce, aslı bozulmadan özgün cümlelerle ifade edilmelidir.

Yapılan araştırmaya bağlı olarak şu öneriler geliştirilmiştir: Öğretmenler, derslerinde özetleme stratejilerinin eğitimine zaman zaman yer vermelidir. Öğrencilerin yaptığı özetler, “özetleme stratejileri” açısından ayrıntılı bir şekilde değerlendirilmelidir. Özet çıkaran bir öğrenci aynı zamanda düşünme sürecini de geliştirebilmelidir. Özetleme stratejilerinin kullanımına yönelik olarak araştırmaların sayısı artırılmalıdır.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Environmental Pollution.

Environmental pollution has begun to become a problem recently. This subject has never been out of agenda in Turkey as well as in the world. Newspapers often made news of this subject. Radios and televisions continuously aired about this subject. They brought the most frightening scenes to us. The reasons and the solutions of environmental pollution have still been discussed.

In big cities traffic accidents, air pollution and water and sewage problems are among the factors that make the environment unlivable. Because of this, people become sick. Schools declare holidays. There are a lot of people who moved away from cities because of environmental pollution.

Such an important environmental problem must be solved. In order to solve this, everybody must be made aware of the importance of environment and must gain love for environment. Besides, factors that pollute the environment must be getting rid of.

The importance of environment has been understood recently. Several precautions have been taken to guarantee a livable environment by state and environmental non-governmental organizations.

That the industrial and sewage outputs are discharged into lakes and seas without being filtered has been tried to be stopped (is this sentence grammatical?!) Industries are being asked to put filters in their chimneys. Urbanization is tried to be continued by keeping the green and tree plantation is given importance. In addition, new parks, playgrounds and rest areas are opened.

Today, we must support the precautions taken against the environmental pollution. We must work on to keep the environment clean and green. Because, we can only rest and be happy in a clean and green environment. We can only breathe fresh air and stay healthy in a such an environment.

Zeki Demirci
A Beautiful Day

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