

## EFFECTS OF STRATEGY INSTRUCTION FOCUS ACTIVITIES ON STUDENTS' READING STRATEGY USE

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### ABSTRACT

When students struggle with reading comprehension they are at a severe disadvantage. They do not retain what has been read and eventually become dissuaded by reading altogether. The purpose of this action research was to discover which guided reading strategies should be implemented to help develop comprehension skills. Educational professionals and theorists have determined that focused intensive instruction of reading strategies will improve reading comprehension. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of explicit direct instruction and cooperative learning on reading comprehension in fourth grade students. A quasi-experimental design was used. There were six cognitive and three affective measures used to collect quantitative data. The between and within the group analyses revealed that both groups had similar reading profiles before and after treatment, and neither group showed significant changes in the strategy use. The analysis of the SIFA Feedback Sheets, post treatment interviews, and three cases imply that strategy instruction can have a positive impact on students' strategy use.

**Keywords:** Instruction, Students, Reading Strategy, Activities.

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### INTRODUCTION

How readers extract meaning from a text has long been a focus of attention because the process of extracting meaning gives us invaluable information about readers' cognitive processes during reading. Reading researchers usually divide reading strategies into two major categories: cognitive and metacognitive. Reading plays an essential role in foreign language classrooms since it is often the major source of L2 input for language learners. It involves challenging processes such as attention coordination, memory, and perceptual and comprehension processes (Kern, R. G.1989). Recent studies in L2 reading illustrate the positive impact of reading comprehension strategies on students' performance when students are taught to use appropriate strategies to help them improve comprehension (Cotterall, 1991; Kern, 1989; Salataci&Akyel, 2002; Pani, 2004). Reading strategies are a set of activities or methods used by language learners to comprehend reading texts. Good language learners appear to use these strategies in effective ways. However, there is evidence that poor readers are not able to use these reading strategies appropriately due to a lack of awareness of the

benefits of the strategies or lack of adequate practice in using them. Since it requires both more linguistic and cognitive processing than reading in the native language, reading in the target language is very challenging for language learners. To comprehend reading texts, language learners must not only understand the words, structure, and purpose, but have access to the background knowledge assumed. Eskey (1986) defines reading in a second language as “a continual interaction of identification skills – that is, the recognition of words and phrases and the grammatical signals required for the simple decoding of the text with interpretive skills – the higher-level cognitive skills that allow for the meaningful reconstruction of a text as unified, coherent structure of meaning” (in Grabe&Stoller, 2002, p.75). In order to help learners deal with difficulties in comprehending texts, language teachers should provide a wide range of ways to improve students’ reading skills. One way is teaching students reading strategies that focus on the comprehension process and are of proven efficacy.

Reading is, in fact, an extraordinary achievement when the number of levels and components that need to be mastered are taken into consideration (Graesser, 2007; Shang, 2010). According to Grabe (2009), “reading is a strategic process in that a number of the skills and processes are needed on the part of the reader to anticipate text information, select key information, organize and mentally summarize information, monitor comprehension, repair comprehension breakdowns, and match comprehension output to reader goals” (p.15). Thus, an important goal for reading instruction should be to help students become expert, or more strategic readers (Janzen &Stoller, 1998). In the past three decades, the fields of pedagogy and reading have focused on strategies, and strategies have been given an important role in reading behavior discussions. Expert readers apply a wide variety of comprehension strategies, i.e., routines and procedures used to better comprehend what is read. For instance, when active readers read the title of a given text, they may bring to the mind what they already know about that particular topic. They may predict the content of the passage. They may make mental images of the text. They may summarize the important points of what they read. They may ask self-questions about what they are reading. They know when the text is understandable and when it is not making sense. Strategic readers know how to repair breakdowns in comprehension. They also skillfully coordinate these strategies, taking into account what the reading task is, what they know about text content, and what type of text they are reading. However, weaker readers make use of a small variety of strategies and use them in a limited and repetitive manner. Overall, flexible use of a range of strategies is what differentiates between proficient readers and weak readers (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991; Graesser, 2007; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991).

### **1.1 COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE READING PROGRAM**

The theoretical framework of reading comprehension investigated in this paper emphasizes the interrelationship of lower and higher order skills and the importance of instruction of both, at all grade levels (Williams, 1998; Nation &Norbury, 2005). In reading instruction, teachers typically differentiate between word recognition and decoding (lower order skills) and comprehension (higher order skills). The traditional approach to reading instruction is to focus on the lower order skills until they have been mastered and only then move on to instruction in the higher order skills. Students that take longer to master the lower order skills will receive instruction in the higher order skills later than their peers. Low-achieving and at-risk students often receive instruction that is heavily focused on lower order skills long after their higher-achieving peers have moved on, leaving them limited opportunity to attain critically important higher order comprehension skills. A complete reading comprehension instructional program must address not only acquisition but also the extended phases of fluency (performing skills accurately and in an integrated manner; reading with speed and expression), transfer (applying skills to novel situations), and maintenance (demonstrating skills over time). Often, without careful instruction, students find it difficult to generalize what they have learned on trained tasks to fluent performance on tasks beyond those used in training (Gersten, Fuchs, Williams, & Baker, 2001; Best, Rowe, Ozuru, & McNamara, 2005). The goal of any reading instruction for at-risk or low achieving students should be transfer of the comprehension skills and strategies they have learned to enable them to fluently read and comprehend novel texts.

### **1.2 READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**

In recent years, particularly since the release of the National Reading Panel report

(NICHD, 2000), research on reading comprehension instruction has focused on comprehension skills and strategies. Many programs have been developed that teach reading comprehension strategies individually or together as a set to improve the comprehension of a text. These strategies range from general strategies that good readers use when they have difficulty comprehending, such as rereading, to specific skills that are useful when reading a novel text, such as finding the main idea. It is important to define the terms reading skill and reading strategy in order to distinguish between them and explain how they are used in the literature and in this particular study. In instructional programs, as well as in many research studies, the terms reading skill and reading strategy have been confounded and used interchangeably (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008). The use of these terms has led to confusion for researchers and teachers, and to a diminished understanding of both skills and strategies. Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) propose that the difference between reading skills and reading strategies lies in the control the reader exercises over them. Reading strategies require effort and control on the part of the reader, whereas reading skills are effortless and automatic actions. It is not the concept, process, or even the goal that determines whether a specific concept is a reading skill or a reading strategy. It is the level of mastery and automaticity that the reader has achieved with the concept that determines whether it is a skill or strategy (Williams & Atkins, 2009). In this paper, therefore, whether a technique or concept is referred to as a skill or strategy will depend on whether the reader exerts conscious control over it. We will primarily refer to reading strategies, with the assumption that we are focusing on the early stages of instruction, before the students have mastered and internalized the strategies into skills. The rate at which the instructed strategies become internalized skills will depend on the teacher, student, the reading task, and the particular skill or strategy. The goal is that, through sufficient modeling, guided practice, and, finally, independent practice, these strategies will become fluent skills for all the students.

### 1.3 COGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN READING

Cognitive strategies aid the reader in constructing meaning from the text. In general, studies in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) reading research provide a binary division of cognitive strategies as bottom-up and top-down (e.g., Block, 1986; Carrell, 1989; Davis & Bistodeau, 1993).

According to Aebersold and Field (1997), during reading, readers' minds repeatedly engage in a variety of processes. Using bottom-up strategies, readers start by processing information at the sentence level. In other words, they focus on identification of the meaning and grammatical category of a word, sentence syntax, text details, and so forth. As they process information that each sentence gives them, they check to see how this information fits, using top-down strategies such as background knowledge, prediction, getting the gist of a text, and skimming. (Barnett, 1988; Carrell, 1989).

### 1.4 EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

The report of the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) indicated that explicit instruction can improve reading comprehension, because it teaches students to use specific cognitive strategies when they encounter barriers to understanding what they are reading. While readers acquire these strategies informally, to some extent, it is the explicit instruction of comprehension strategies that has been shown to be highly effective in cultivating understanding (NRP, 2000). Such explicit instruction is particularly important for students at risk for academic failure. While good readers can develop an understanding of comprehension strategies without explicit instruction, struggling and at risk readers often require teachers to explicitly teach them how, when, and why to use the strategies. In this explicit instructional model, teachers demonstrate strategies for students and guide practice until the students are able to carry out the strategies independently. Effective explicit instruction includes a direct explanation of the strategy, modeling the strategy for students, guided practice in using the strategy, and, finally, independent application of the strategy (Armbruster et. al., 2001).

### 1.5 METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN READING

Met cognitive strategies are strategies that function to monitor or regulate cognitive strategies (Devine, 1993; Flavell, 1981). They include "*checking* the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, *planning* one's next move, *monitoring* the effectiveness of any attempted action, *testing*, *revising*, and *evaluating* one's strategies for learning" (Baker & Brown, 1984, p. 354). In other words, skimming a text for key information involves using a cognitive strategy, whereas assessing the effectiveness of skimming for gathering textual information would be a met cognitive strategy (Devine, 1993, p. 112).

### 1.6 THE EFFECTS OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY

Studies conducted on reading instruction and reading strategies (e.g., Bereiter & Bird, 1985; Carrell, 1985; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Cotterall, 1990; Palincsar & Brown, 1984) indicated that non-proficient L1 and L2 readers either don't possess knowledge about strategies or mainly engage in bottom-up strategies. The findings of these studies also indicate that strategy instruction with a focus on comprehension monitoring can help less skilled readers overcome their difficulties in reading. The types of strategy instruction used in these studies mainly consist of teacher modeling of the strategies followed by student practice in the form of group work. Bereiter and Bird in their study in the L1 context (1985) identified four repair strategies: restatement, re-reading, demanding relationship, and problem formulation. Using these four strategies, they conducted an experimental study which compared the effects of instruction consisting of modeling the reading strategies and explanation to instruction only modeling the strategies. The "modeling-plus-explanation" instruction included an explanation of situations in which the four strategies mentioned above could be used as well as the modeling of these strategies. In other words, the students were both helped to understand and imitate these repair strategies which led to comprehension monitoring. As a result of the study, the experimental group receiving modeling and explanation scores significantly higher on the comprehension post-test than the control group receive only modeling. Bereiter and Bird concluded that students will not readily acquire reading strategies simply by imitating models; they also need comprehension-monitoring activities which consist of recognizing comprehension problems and selecting repair strategies.

### 1.7 READING STRATEGIES

In general, many second language learning strategies have been identified and classified by different researchers (see for example, Naiman, Fröhlich, Stern, & Todesco, 1978; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, & Küpper, 1985; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1975). Studies of language learning strategy application, which deal with the influence of strategy training for different language skills (i.e., reading, listening, writing, and speaking), and different learners, indicate that strategy instruction is effective in improving students' performance on a wide range of problem-solving tasks (O'Malley et al., 1985).

In line with this relatively recent shift of attention to effective second language learning strategies, there has been much attention to identifying what more-proficient readers do while trying to understand what they read, including what strategies they apply and how, why, and when they use those strategies (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001). Accordingly, in the last two decades, comprehension instruction and reading-strategies instruction have converged. As noted by Pressley (2006) and Grabe (2009), comprehension instruction now includes teaching students a set of strategies to use while they are trying to comprehend the main idea of the text, and combining these two goals through scaffolded discussions as the students are reading the text. This needs the identification of effective strategies that support comprehension.

Two lines of research have led to the identification of effective reading strategies: (1) Descriptive research reporting of what expert readers do while reading difficult texts (e.g., Othman & Jaidi, 2012; Shang, 2010; Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001; Yau, 2009; Zhang & Wu, 2009), and (2) Experimental research showing the effectiveness of teaching certain reading comprehension strategies to different groups of students (e.g., Aghaie & Zhang, 2012; Janzen, 2003; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Salataci & Akyel, 2002). These two research types have had, at least, two very important outcomes; first, students need to develop met cognitive awareness for text comprehension, and second, students need to learn a variety of effective reading strategies to use to comprehend texts (Grebe, 2009).

### 1.8 STRATEGIC READING

According to Grebe (2009), researchers dealing with reading instruction all acknowledge the centrality of strategy use and the development of strategic reader for comprehension. Strategic readers are readers who know a set of effective strategies and use them without continuously needing to move to a level of conscious problem solving but still can reflect consciously on a strategy when ask to do so and also know where, when, and why to use the strategies (Grebe, 2009; Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Paris et al., 1983). While expert readers are characterized by strategic reading, novice and poor reader's don't exhibit such behaviors (Paris & Myers, 1981; Paris & Oka, 1986; Wagoner, 1983).

Through L2 reading strategy research we have come to understand how strategic readers interact with what they are reading and how their strategic behavior results in their comprehension of a text (e.g., Anderson, 1991; Carrel, 1991; Salataci&Akyel, 2002). Research has revealed that successful second language readers know how to apply effective strategies to better understand a text. They can read in different manners for different purposes (Arabsolghar& Elkins, 2001), often jump back and forth in text and pay more attention to some parts of the text than to others, i.e., distribute their attention unequally (Pressley & Harris, 2006). On the contrary, non-proficient poorer readers mostly read word by word in a linear way (Duke, Pressley, & Hilden, 2004; Pressley & Harris, 2006). They cannot use appropriate strategies for different goals and they generally don't possess met cognitive knowledge about and control over reading strategies and don't know how to approach reading (Baker & Brown, 1984; Palincsar& Brown, 1984; Paris et al., 1991; Yang, 2002). It is important to note that it is difficult to draw overall conclusions and generalize from research on L2 reading strategy use because of the many moderating variables (e.g., the interactive nature of L2 reading, learner characteristics, potential strategies, different contexts, differing manners and types of treatment and measurement, etc.) that potentially influence the results (Brantmeier, 2002; Grabe, 1991; Taylor et al., 2006).

### 1.9 STRATEGIC READING INSTRUCTION

Strategic reading instruction is instruction in the actual execution of reading strategies to reach the goal of reading comprehension (Bimmel, van den Bergh, & Oostdam, 2001). The main characteristics of this instruction include: explaining what comprehension-supporting reading strategies are, and where, when, how, and why they can be used, as well as how they can be adapted to various situations, modeling strategic reading behavior, and providing feedback on student strategy use by teachers (Anderson, 1991; Carrell et al., 1998; Duke & Pearson, 2002; Janzen, 2003; Paris & Oka, 1986).

There is consensus among many reading researchers that teaching a combination of reading strategies (usually between four to eight strategies) more than individual strategy instruction improves comprehension and recall of information from texts (Baker, 2002; Block & Pressley, 2007, 2002; Duke & Pearson, 2002). There are several multiple-strategy instruction approaches which are supported by empirical research (e.g., Direct Explanation, Reciprocal Teaching, Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI), Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), etc.) (See Grabe, 2009, pp. 230-240, for a comprehensive description).

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Wright and Brown (2006) explored the potential of reading strategy instruction in raising the learner readers' awareness of reading strategies, in extending the range of strategies they employed and in encouraging learners to monitor and reflect upon their reading. The findings have revealed that strategy training could encourage learner readers to reflect on their strategy use and seemed to boost their confidence in their own reading abilities. Salataci and Akyel (2002) investigated the possible effects of reading instruction on reading in Turkish and English. The results indicated that strategy instruction had a positive effect on both Turkish and English reading strategies and on reading comprehension in English.

In still another study, Shang (2010) investigated a group of Taiwanese EFL learners' use of three reading strategies (cognitive, metacognitive, compensation strategies), their perceived impact on the learners' self-efficacy, and the link between reading strategy use and perceived self-efficacy on their English reading comprehension. The results of this study showed that metacognitive strategy was used most frequently, followed by compensation strategy, and then cognitive strategy. Besides, a significant positive relationship was found between the use of reading strategies and perceptions of self-efficacy. However, reading strategies were unrelated to reading achievement.

In the literature, studies that have been carried out on of reading strategy instruction are divided into two main categories. The first category of the studies describes the readers' strategy use. The results of these studies have revealed that strategy use is different among more and less proficient readers. Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006) in a study on language learning strategy use revealed that students in the intermediate level reported more use of learning strategies than beginning and advanced students and that more strategic language learners advanced along the proficiency continuum faster than less strategic ones. Yau (2005) in another study found that proficient readers employ more sophisticated approaches to reading than less-

proficient readers. For instance, in his study the skilled reader employed strategies of inference, summarization and synthesis during and after reading, while the less skilled reader applied bridging inferences, paraphrasing and repetition. YaaliJahromi (2002) concluded that the high proficient students used more strategies. The results of a study by Al- Melhi (2000) on the reported and the actual reading strategies and the metacognitive awareness of a random sample of fourth-year Saudi college students as they read in English as a foreign language showed that some differences did exist between the skilled and less-skilled readers in terms of their actual and reported reading strategies, their use of global and local strategies, their metacognitive awareness, their perception of a good reader, and their self-confidence as readers.

The second category of studies has been conducted to investigate the effect of reading strategy instruction on the readers' reading performance. Davis (2010), based on a meta-analysis of comprehension strategy instruction for upper elementary and middle school students in America, concluded that instruction on the use of reading comprehension strategies has a positive impact on students' achievements in grades 4-8.

McKeon, Beck, and Blake (2009) conducted a two-year study in which standardized comprehension instruction for representations of two major approaches was designed and implemented. The effectiveness of the two experimental comprehension instructional conditions (Content and Strategies) and a control condition were compared. Content instruction focused students' attention on the content of the text through open, meaning-based questions about the text. In strategies instruction, students were taught specific procedures to guide their access to text during reading of the text. The results of the study revealed that there was no difference between the performances of the two experimental groups for some aspects of comprehension. However, for narrative recall and expository learning probes, the students following content instruction outperformed that following strategy instruction.

Khosravi (2000) made an attempt to investigate the effect of scanning and skimming, as two reading strategies, on Iranian EFL students' reading rate and reading comprehension. The analysis of the data indicated that scanning could significantly improve the students' both reading rate and reading comprehension, while skimming only accounted for significant improvement of the reading comprehension of the subjects. Shokrpour and Fotovatian (2009) conducted an experimental study to determine the effects of consciousness-raising of metacognitive strategies on a group of Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension. The results of this study revealed that compared to the control group, the experimental group showed a significant improvement in reading comprehension at the end of the treatment period.

This study incorporated elements of three theories: (a) Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, (b) Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory, and (c) Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (2002). Bandura acknowledged that learning occurs on direct tuition or instrumental training. This is when instructors or parents are explicit about what they want the child to learn and use rewards or punishments to direct behavior. Second, a child can learn from parent modeling (Bandura, 1963). Supporting Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977), which states that learning occurs in a social environment, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, and Zimbardo (2000) found that early prosocial behavior predicts future academic achievement. As Bandura (1989) noted, observational learning requires four component sub functions. These include attention, retention, motor reproduction, and motivation. In order for learning to occur, it is necessary for students to pay attention to key information being modeled. Next, students must remember the information presented. —People cannot be much influenced by observed events if they do not remember them (Bandura, 1989, p. 24). During this stage, students must incorporate what is modeled into memory. In the third sub function of motor reproduction, students replicate the behavior demonstrated (Artino, 2007). Lastly, the learner is motivated through incentives which are direct, vicarious, or self-produced.

Unlike Piaget's theory (1936), which hesitated to —push children beyond what they were developmentally ready for learning, Vygotsky believed that with support children can reach the next stage of development, if teachers plan curriculum that will

stretch children's competence. Like Bandura, Vygotsky theorizes that children can acquire learning by observing and imitating peers or adults. Therefore, it is important to provide time for students to collaborate and work together. During this time, students are encouraged to converse and interact socially. Conversation

helps a child learn the role of language and individual experience and opinions. —Children learn not only by doing but also by talking, working with friends, and persisting until they *get it* (Mooney, 2000, p. 92).

McNamara (2004) states that, “although reading strategically is important for comprehension, the amount of knowledge the reader possesses about the world and about the text content is also an important factor to consider” (p. 4).

Rashotte, Voeller and Conway (2001) determined through their research, “that one major task for the educational establishment is to find ways to deliver both the quality and the intensity of instruction that many children seem to require,” (p. 56). However difficult it is to incorporate the time necessary to efficiently instruct students with reading disabilities, finding that time is a necessary obstacle that educators must try to overcome. Duration and intensity of instruction is crucial to student development in comprehension strategies, without teacher guidance, reading achievement will only slightly increase, as Toppings, Samuels, and Paul (2007) confirm, “appropriate, effective implementation involves not only the monitoring of reading practice, but also implies action to guide the student towards successful comprehension” (p. 262). It is not enough to simply explain strategies to a student, one must ensure through reinforcement of the strategies, that the student knows how to properly use them.

Block et al. (2009) identify six major instructional approaches, which are often found in classrooms today, and those are the following: workbook practice individualized schema-based learning, situated practice, conceptual learning, transactional learning, and basal readers. The most commonly used reading programs in the United States are the basal or core reading programs.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

Considering that reading comprehension is crucial to literacy acquisition, this action research study asks, which guided reading strategies most successfully lend themselves to the development of comprehension skills in a seventh grade student?

### **3.1 METHOD**

During this study, I executed a variety of reading strategies with Kyle; and determine the benefits of each strategy. The study focused on multiple guided reading strategies: pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading, as a way to help reinforce Kyle’s comprehension of written text. The reading strategies were taught by combining all three guided reading elements while reading a text. I observed how well each strategy worked for him and what benefits they provided in reading comprehension. Kyle and I had twelve sessions together and each session lasted for about two hours.

Each day that Kyle and I spent reading text, I implemented a pre-reading strategy to introduce the reading and try to bring in Kyle’s background knowledge, a during-reading strategy to focus on the areas where he struggled with reading comprehension, and an after reading strategy to reinforce and check for comprehension. Pre-reading strategies often included vocabulary from the text that Kyle was not familiar with or may have needed re-introduction to.

### **3.2 QUALITY AND CREDIBILITY OF RESEARCH**

Throughout this research it was important to ensure the quality and credibility of the study. To help assure credibility of this study I applied multiple strategies. Throughout this study I worked with two “critical colleagues” who helped me review each step of the study. My critical colleagues analyzed the progress of the study from the beginning; it was beneficial to have the additional insight afforded by each of them throughout the process. I also implemented triangulation with this study. Triangulation is when a researcher uses multiple sources of data (Mills, 2010). I collected data and information using multiple approaches. In addition, I performed follow up interviews with Kyle to find out which strategies he enjoyed most and felt worked the best. I collected all documents, student work, recordings, artifacts, and questionnaires (Appendix B and Appendix C) that Kyle had completed during our time together. I also ensured transferability during my research. Transferability is the researcher’s belief that everything is “context bound” (Mills, 2010, p. 104), and not to develop statements that can be generalized to larger groups of people. I collected data specific to the study to make multiple comparisons. Credibility, or the researcher’s ability to take into account the complexities and patterns that present themselves in the study, as well as dependability, or testability of the data (Mills, 2010), was also important to this study. I addressed some of the rereading strategies I had

performed with Kyle and many of the post-reading strategies as well. My critical colleagues were also able to review my data and provide useful feedback to my study

### 3.3 INFORMED CONSENT AND PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Before beginning my research process I collected informed consent and protection of the rights of the participants. This study was a qualitative study where I worked one on one with Kyle. I gave both Kyle and his parents' consent forms, which discussed the study and asked for permission and a signature to confirm authorization to perform research. It was important that the parents understand that, for this study, all names were anonymous and any identifying marks were removed from artifacts used during the study. All participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms and confidentiality was guaranteed to both Kyle and his family.

### CONCLUSION

According to above-mentioned studies, most researchers point to the necessity of teaching effective reading strategies to students so that they are able to enhance their reading achievement. By getting explicit instruction in effective strategies and learning to monitor and check their comprehension while reading, readers can become expert readers and comprehend whole text. Thus, the development of reading comprehension for EFL students is highly dependent of learning what strategies are, how, when, and where to use particular strategies, as well as how to evaluate their use. The view of comprehension as the fluent implementation of strategic responses indicates the close relationship among comprehension, cognitive strategies, and metacognition. What this review of research reveals is that reading comprehension involves strategic responses to texts, but also that much more is needed (e.g., a combination of automatic word recognition, a large vocabulary, background knowledge, and extensive reading practice) in addition to comprehension strategies. As Anderson (1999) states, "the goal of explicit strategy instruction is to move readers from conscious control of reading strategies to unconscious use of reading skills. The results of the study indicate that the reading strategy instruction which the participants were exposed to in English affected their use of reading strategies in Turkish and English, suggesting that the process of transfer is bi-directional and interactive. As a result of the instruction, the strategies of prediction, summarizing, and using prior knowledge were utilized significantly more frequently both in Turkish and in English after the instruction. These were the strategies that were practiced in the strategy instruction implemented in this study. Thus, these results concur with the findings of the studies of Bereiter and Bird (1985), Cotterall (1990), and Palincsar and Brown (1984) in that there was a significant increase in the frequency with which the students employed the strategies they practiced after the instruction. Moreover, the frequencies with which the participants employed metacognitive strategies were statistically higher during the reading process in English after the instruction.

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