

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF STRATEGY TRAINING
IN READING INSTRUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Title: Teachers' Perceptions of Strategy Training in Reading Instruction

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Reading strategies are processes used by a learner to enhance reading and to overcome comprehension failures. In order to better help students overcome such difficulties, training in reading strategies is necessary. Only with the appropriate use of materials and techniques, can reading strategies be best taught to students.

The objective of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions of strategy training in their reading instruction at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages (EMU SFL). Additionally, the study attempted to explore what reading strategies teachers teach, how they decide which strategies to teach, and how they make use of the materials to teach reading strategies. The findings of the study might contribute to the design of the reading materials in terms of more effective usage of reading strategies.

A questionnaire was administered to the 46 teachers who taught at the intermediate level during the third module of the 2001-2002 academic year in EMU SFL and 33 of them returned the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of five parts, reflecting the different research questions. The aim of the questionnaire was to gather a general picture of the perceptions of the teachers towards reading strategies

and their presentation through the materials. After the analysis of the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to gather more in-depth information about the teachers' teaching practices, reading strategies, and how they make use of the reading materials both in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack with six participants.

Data collected through the questionnaire were analysed through quantitative methods by employing descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages. In order to support the results and see the distribution of answers for each question, chi-square values were also calculated using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data collected through the interviews were analysed by using cross sectional and non-cross sectional categorization. Through cross sectional categorization, teachers' responses were categorized under the heading of three phases of reading instruction, and through non-cross sectional categorization, unexpected themes within the individual participants were analysed separately and interpreted by the researcher.

The data results revealed that the majority of teachers at EMU SFL are somewhat familiar with the concept of reading strategies. The results show that teachers use the materials in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack to teach certain reading strategies. According to the results, all the teachers teach pre-reading strategies, and they rely on the activities designed for the reading materials to teach while-reading strategies. However, teachers are likely to neglect the use of post-reading strategies as they claim there are few such activities in the materials and students are easily bored with them.

Apart from the reading strategies taught, some teachers mentioned some materials that are culturally unfamiliar to students. Therefore, they claim that it is difficult for them to use some strategies as well as to adapt the materials. Some teachers mentioned the issue of training for teachers so that they could be more aware of the use of reading strategies other than skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Oxford (1990, p. 8) defines the term learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to new situations”. Without a doubt, strategy use directly affects a learner’s new knowledge as well as his/her motivational and affective state (Weinstein, 1987). Therefore, learning strategies can be seen as attempts by the learner to gain linguistic competence in the target language.

Learners learn best when they use specific procedures while performing various learning tasks. As Wallace (1992) points out, “strategies involve ways of processing text which will vary with the nature of the text, the reader’s purpose, and the context of situation” (p.57). Selecting the appropriate strategies according to type of the text, the purpose for reading, and what the reader is required to do with the text, is important in the process of reading. For example, if a reader applies several techniques while completing a reading task and performs appropriate uses of strategies, his or her success on the particular task is more likely to be achieved (Richards, 1996). In this case, the use of strategies and selection of the most appropriate strategy depend to a large extent on how the strategies have been taught, as not every student is equally successful at applying various ways to increase their comprehension of a text.

Anderson (1991) argues that successful reading does not only depend on knowing what strategy to use but also knowing how to use it together with other strategies. According to Duffy’s (1993) definition, reading strategies are “plans for solving problems encountered in constructing meaning” (p.232). In planning how to

solve these problems, various strategies are used during the process of reading. Metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective are strategies used by the reader to figure out the meaning and enhance the learning from a text.

Training in the use of reading strategies has been shown to help improve student performance on tests of comprehension and recall (Carrell, 1985; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Pearson & Fielding, 1991 as cited in Janzen, 1996). If students are trained to learn long-term strategy use and if they are helped to become more aware of the range of possible strategies that they can consciously select during language learning and use, language learning will be facilitated (Cohen, 1998).

In the process of reading strategy training, the use of different types of strategies is emphasized. For instance, while teaching a cognitive skill, O'Maley and Chamot (1990) suggest the advantage of using strategies that are embedded in a task. Devine (1993) exemplifies the process by stating that skimming a text occurs by using a cognitive strategy. The knowledge on how to do it belongs to the metacognitive sphere, in other words, "assessing the effectiveness of skimming" to have information clues about the text is a metacognitive strategy. Therefore, training is a necessary process to help students learn how to use different strategies in a single task.

Many studies have been done to find out if strategy training in reading instruction enhances students' reading comprehension and success. It has also been indicated that strategy training is successful in improving the effectiveness of students' learning and attitudes (Danserau, 1988). By using strategies, students will be reading the way that expert readers do. Strategies help readers to process the text actively, to monitor their comprehension, and to connect what they are reading to

their own knowledge and to other parts of the text (Janzen, 1996). As an added result, their attitudes toward language learning are likely to be much more positive.

Along the same line, Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto, (1989) and Cotterall (1990) found that metacognitive and cognitive strategy instruction had positive results in that it enhanced students' reading comprehension. They came to a conclusion by saying that students may gain benefit from metacognitive strategy instruction if the program includes it in the curriculum.

The Curricular Team at EMU SFL takes the responsibility of supplying the most appropriate training materials. Their duty is to select useful and suitable material to be used in class. Also, they should be seeking ways to design class materials in such a way that while working on the materials, students should use the strategies they have been taught.

Statement of the Problem

Education at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages, (EMU SFL) is based on a modular system. An academic year consists of four modules and each module lasts for eight weeks. The students, who are placed at beginner to intermediate levels, receive their instruction based on integrated skills at EMU SFL. For all levels of instruction, Headway course books are used. Additionally, the Curricular Team has developed packs for each level, which have both complementary and supplementary materials for all skills.

In recent years, during weekly held teaching team meetings, it was observed by the researcher that teachers have reported that they have been encountering certain problems in their reading instruction at EMU SFL. The main complaint has been that students have difficulty in coping with the reading texts in terms of

comprehending them, dealing with vocabulary, and completing the activities. In order to better help students to cope with the difficulties mentioned above, the Curricular Team added into the packs some materials that explicitly presented certain reading strategies in the 2000-2001 academic year. However, teachers complained that students found those materials boring and they were not successful in using those same strategies in other reading texts. For the 2001-2002 academic year, the Curricular Team again redesigned the reading materials in the packs. They excluded the explicit reading strategy training materials and subtly integrated certain reading strategies in almost all the reading texts.

Therefore, the aims of this study were to gain a general idea of whether strategy training is taking place in reading instruction, and if so, what reading strategies are being taught, how they are being taught, and how the current reading materials are being used to teach them. To approach these questions, the study opted to investigate the teachers' perceptions of strategy training in reading instruction, and collected data on their reported teaching practices and the appropriateness of the textbooks for teaching reading strategies.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the understandings and the perceptions of the reading strategies of the teachers who work at EMU SFL. The study also investigated the reading strategies the teachers include in their reading instruction, how they decide which strategies to teach, and how they make use of the materials to teach reading strategies.

Significance of the Problem

“Reading strategies indicate how readers conceive of a task, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they don't understand. Such strategies are used by the reader to enhance reading comprehension and overcome comprehension failure” (Reading strategies, n.d.). In order to help students overcome comprehension failure, teaching them reading strategies is essential. However, before teaching the appropriate strategies to students, teachers should be aware of what strategies to teach and how best to teach those strategies to help students cope with the reading materials. Another important point is that teachers should be aware of how to make use of reading materials in the most efficient way to teach the appropriate reading strategies and how to turn strategy training into an ongoing process in which students can continue to employ the strategies outside of class.

With this in mind, investigating teachers' perception of strategy training in reading instruction is an essential first step. It is also helpful to have an idea about what teachers report doing in terms of reading strategy instruction and how they use certain reading materials to teach reading strategies. The results of this study were intended therefore, to contribute to the Curricular Team in redesigning the reading materials and including certain reading strategies in the packs. For the following academic year, the teachers might be provided certain guidelines on reading strategies and how to teach reading strategies to students.

Additionally, the results of this study might contribute to the discussion in the literature about the importance of integrating certain and varied reading strategies in the reading materials with useful guidelines for teachers on how to utilize those strategies in their reading instructions.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are teachers' understandings and perceptions of reading strategies and the purposes for teaching them?
2. According to teachers' self-reports,
 - a. What reading strategies (if any) do they teach?
 - b. How do they decide which strategies to teach?
 - c. How do they make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies?

Conclusion

In the succeeding chapters of this thesis, a review of the literature will be presented and related studies to the present study will be discussed. In chapter three, methodological procedures, setting and participants, research tools, and how they were utilized will be discussed. Chapter four presents the data obtained through questionnaires and interviews, and in the final chapter, the study will be summarized, the results will be discussed, the limitations of the study will be mentioned, and pedagogical implications on the study will be drawn.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief definition and characteristics of reading, which serves as a basis for the study. This is followed by a discussion on reading process. Next, since various reading models are related to certain reading strategies, three basic reading models will be presented. The discussion of reading strategies will be the succeeding part. Finally, in order to support the significance of the present study, previously conducted studies based on training students on reading strategies and teachers' perceptions on reading strategy training will be discussed.

Characteristics of Reading

In the literature, fluent reading has been characterized as “rapid, purposeful, interactive, comprehending, flexible, and gradually developing” (cf. Anderson, Hiebert, Schott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Grabe, 1988; Hall, White, & Guthrie, 1986; Smith, 1982 as cited in Grabe 1991, p. 378). In further explaining the features of fluent reading, Grabe (1991) states that for a reader to retain the message conveyed in a written text, and to make the necessary inferences and connections, rapid reading is essential. He says reading is purposeful because the reader has a purpose for reading (e.g., skimming or scanning). Reading is interactive because an interaction occurs between the constructed meaning and the reader's background knowledge and also in the sense that many skills work together in the reading process concurrently. Reading is comprehending, because the reader expects to understand. Reading develops gradually because the reader employs a range of strategies to read efficiently, such as adjusting the reading speed, skimming ahead, considering titles,

headings, pictures, test structure information, and anticipating information to come and so on (pp. 378-379).

The Reading Process

Opposing views on the nature of the reading process have been stated. Based on what has been argued in the literature, Zakaluk (1996) mentions two contradicting ideas; one being that reading is a passive skill in which readers only decode what is written, and the other, that readers actively add their possessed knowledge to the text in order to get the message. Even when defined as a passive skill, he argues, reading involves quite active mental processes, and therefore, can be considered as an active process (Zakaluk, 1996). Despite the controversy among views on passivity of the reading process, it is widely agreed upon that reading is an involved and complex process (Allan & Bruton, 1998; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989; Grabe, 1991; Zakaluk, 1996) of making meaning from text for a variety of purposes and in a wide range of contexts (Allan & Bruton, 1998). The process involves people actively processing information (Vacca, Vacca & Gove, 1991) during which “an interaction between thought and language” (Grabe, 1988, p. 57) occurs. Because of this complexity, the process of reading, Wallace (1992) states that it “is not possible to identify specific skills which can be built up in any hierarchical way to produce an effective reader” (p. 42).

Early discussion over whether reading is a passive or an active process reached a climax when Goodman published his article on reading theory in 1967. In his article Goodman called reading as a ‘psycholinguistic guessing game,’ in which he claimed, an interaction occurs between the reader and the text (Goodman, 1988). The argument gained ground and served as a basis to those claims of reading as an

interactive process, not simply an information decoding process (Grabe, 1991). Goodman's psycholinguistic perspective on reading, which is based on insights derived from contemporary linguistic and cognitive psychology, has had a strong influence on views of second and foreign language reading. From this perspective, reading is viewed as a complex information processing skill (Goodman, 1988).

Based on changing views on the reading process, the role given to the reader as passive decoder has changed into one of "an active, planning, decision-making individual who coordinates a number of skills and strategies to facilitate comprehension" (Silberstein, 1987, p. 30). Goodman (1988), drawing on his own argument, points out that the reader does not use all the information available to him, s/he picks and chooses from the available information just enough to select and predict a language structure, which is decodable.

Later, Smith (1971, 1979, 1982 as cited in Grabe, 1991) supported Goodman's arguments that reading is a "hypothesis-driven" process. Smith makes his agreement explicit by saying that effective readers make use of their pre-existing knowledge when necessary during the course of reading a text, so in other words they do more than merely decoding written symbols.

Goodman (1988) claims that an effective reader constructs meaning from written language by using the knowledge of graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic systems of language through 'assimilation or accommodation, and coming to an agreement' with what the writer intends to mean. Readers should use strategies to reduce uncertainty and be selective about the use of the cues. Later, Wallace (1992) defined Goodman's 'graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic' cues. He defines 'graphophonic' cues as "readers' knowledge of phonetic and visual features of

English”, which are “generally agreed conventions about the nature of the writing system”. ‘Syntactic’ cues refer to a “possible kind of word order” and ‘semantic’ cues refer to word meaning, collocation, and schematic knowledge (Wallace, 1992 p.20).

Coady (1979) also shared the same views with Goodman and Smith on the reading process and developed a psycholinguistic model for ESL/EFL readers. He emphasized three components of the reading process, which are “process strategies, background knowledge, and conceptual abilities”. Coady diagramed his view as follows:

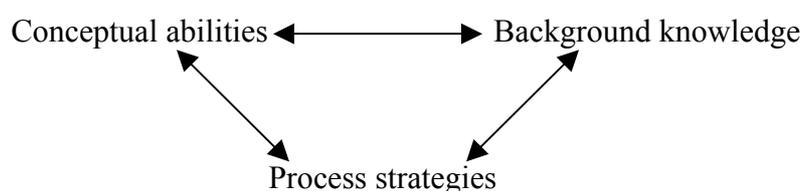


Figure1. Coady’s (1979) Model for ESL/EFL Readers.

According to Coady, conceptual abilities involve intellectual capacity such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, and make inferences. Process strategies are abilities or skills to reconstruct the meaning of the text through sampling based on the knowledge of grapheme-morpheme correspondences, syllable-morpheme information, and lexical, meaning and cognitive strategies (Mei-yun, 1989). Grabe (1991) interprets Coady’s model by saying that low level readers are more dependent on word decoding, for which he gives the example of ‘word identification’, whereas more proficient readers move their attention to more abstract conceptual abilities and make better use of background knowledge. These more proficient readers use only as much textual information as is necessary for confirming and predicting the information in the text. Grabe (1991) points out the importance of noting that the

interpretation of the reading process as emphasized by Coady, is operationalized by Clarke and Silberstein (1977 as cited in Grabe 1991) in their pedagogical implications such as “guessing meaning from context, defining expectations, making inferences about the text, skimming ahead to fill the context, etc” (p. 378), in which they characterized reading as an active process of comprehending and therefore, emphasized the importance of teaching strategies to facilitate more effective reading.

Schema Theory, Different Reading Models and Strategy Training

Training students on reading strategies is related to different models of reading. Schema theory has long been dominant among the different reading models known as bottom-up, top-down, and interactive. The term schema refers to the background knowledge of the reader. In this section of chapter the term ‘schema’ will be defined, different reading models will be discussed and finally the importance of strategy training will be considered.

Schema Theory

Barlett was the first person to use the term ‘schema theory’ (Nunan, 1991). In his classic book *Remembering*, Barlett defined the term schema as “an active organization of past reactions or past experience” (Barlett, as cited in Anderson & Pearson, 1988, p.204).

Although the term schema theory is not well defined (Garnham, 1985; Kintsch, 1988; Riner & Polatsek, 1989 as cited in Grabe, 1991), it is known that it describes prior knowledge and considers how this previous knowledge facilitates comprehension. Some researchers (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987; Cook, 1996; Silberstein, 1987) argue that the background knowledge of the reader is the most important factor that facilitates text comprehension. According to Silberstein (1987),

schema is “pre-existing knowledge structures stored hierarchically in the brain, the more general subsuming the more specific” (p. 31). Nunan (1991) defines schema as “the knowledge we carry around in our head ... organized into interrelated patterns. These are constructed from our previous experience of the experiential world, and guide us as we make sense of new experiences” (p. 68). From a schematic theory perspective, therefore, comprehension in reading takes place as a result of both the utilization of linguistic and background knowledge. As students connect different background knowledge to relate with the topic/text, the interpretation of text changes (Cook, 1996). For example, in order to construct meaning, skilled readers make use of various pre-existing information (Rumelhart, 1980), this may include conceptual knowledge (content schemata), which involves “knowledge of the world beyond text” (Silberstein, 1994), text-structure knowledge (formal schemata), which involves “knowledge of rhetorical structures and conventions” (Silberstein, 1994), and knowledge about text-processing strategies.

The results of Carrell’s (1985) and Carrell and Eisterhold’s (1987) studies support the statements on the importance of background knowledge, which involves formal and content schemata. They support that activating content information plays a major role in students’ comprehension of reading text. Researchers (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987; Carrell, 1985; Rumelhart, 1980) have emphasized that teachers should use various strategies and train students in order to activate their background knowledge so that students could better be able to comprehend the given text. Carrell (1988) also argues that lack of schema activation leads to difficulty in comprehension. Therefore, Carrell (1985) suggests that training on the use of background knowledge, especially in the form of pre-reading and comprehension

strategies, is very crucial for EFL/ ESL. Such training can help ESL/EFL students to grasp the text because, as Hudson (1982) argues, adequate use of background knowledge is helpful when coping with a lack of linguistic knowledge. Even if students do not have enough background knowledge to link the information in the text with their knowledge of the world, teachers should provide students with enough background knowledge so that students are able to interpret the text. (Barnett, 1988; Carrell, 1988; Dubin & Bycina, 1991). In order to help students reach relevant data in the text, pre-reading activities are used to activate schemata or provide students with enough background knowledge to deal with the text. Krashen (1981) also remarks that pre-reading strategies help students to learn necessary vocabulary and syntax if similar contexts are repeated. Moreover, by activating the background knowledge of students, they are better able to retain knowledge because such activities “encourage readers to consciously interact with and interrogate a text in order to create meaning” (p. 32).

Researchers also indicate the importance of background knowledge in terms of cultural issues. They claim that as much as prior linguistic knowledge (formal schemata) affects reading comprehension, so does the prior cultural knowledge (content schemata) of the reader. (Carrell, 1984; Pritchard, 1990; Steffenson & Joag-Dev, 1984 as cited in Grabe, 1991). Carrell and Eisterhold (1987) emphasize that the background knowledge that EFL/ESL readers bring to a text is culture-specific. They say that when a reader attempts to read a culture-bound text, s/he will fail to comprehend it if not provided with the required background knowledge. Even much earlier, one scholar pointed out that different “values and attitudes are one of the main sources of problems in foreign language learning. Culture-specific values can

be a significant factor in comprehension if the values expressed by the text differ from the values held by the reader” (Rivers, 1968, cited in Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987, p. 83). Therefore, in order to help students understand culture-specific texts better, students should be provided with enough content schema.

Although some of the primary implications of schema theory remain valid in different teaching situations, such as the value of stimulating background knowledge in reading, certain criticisms have been made on the adequacy of schema as an explanatory theory for what occurs in the reading process. The results of some more recent studies (Price and Driscoll, 1997; Schwartz et al, 1998 as cited in Widmayer, n.d.) show that the reader's background knowledge helps set up context. In terms of literary texts for example, Price and Driscoll (1997 as cited in Widmayer, n.d.) claim that schema can help the reader understand the genre (e.g., fairy tale, historical novel, etc.), and gain a basic understanding of what is going on, but it does not address either the emotional/affective side of the reading experience or our deeper understanding/appreciation of what the text means. For example, Simon (as cited in Miall, 1995), stated in that comprehending certain literary texts such as “Little Red Riding Hood” or “Hamlet”, the ‘context schema’, which refers to prior knowledge is not sufficient to comprehend the text. Simon says, at this point, the reader has to make use of the ‘problem schema’, which “grows out of the information found in the text itself” (p. 1) and has to create his/her own understanding in order to make meaning out of the text, thereby, going beyond what is normally considered as schema. Nevertheless, as certain studies have convincingly argued (Carrell, 1985; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987), schema still has validity for suggesting instructional strategies that can help readers’ comprehension of texts.

Reading Models

Schema Theory has had a strong impact on many reading models and on the use of strategic reading. In the following paragraphs, top-down, bottom-up, and interactive reading models will be mentioned.

Top-Down Reading Model

The top-down reading model is very much affected by the concept of background knowledge. Predicting, using titles and illustrations to understand reading with purpose, getting the gist of a text by skimming, scanning, and the strategies related to textual organization are some of the reading strategies that are promoted through the use of a top-down reading model (Barnett, 1988; Carrell, 1988). This model also suggests that readers use their knowledge of the subject (background knowledge), their knowledge of how language works, their own motivation, interest, and attitudes towards the content of the texts, in their interaction with the text (Zalioğlu, 2000).

Bottom-Up Reading Model

The argument for bottom-up reading, on the other hand, is that it involves “accurately using the words and structures needed” (Zakaluk, 1996, p. 3) to make meaning out of the text. Bottom-up model implies that meaning is constructed starting from the smallest units and working up to a broader understanding. This model of reading is also called a “data-driven” (Silberstain, 1987) process because the reader is dependent on ‘text-based processing’, in which the meaning arises from the ‘incoming data’. In bottom-up reading, the comprehension goes from ‘word, [to] sentence and [to] discourse’ (Silberstein, 1994, p. 7). That is to say, words are combined into meaningful sentences and those are formed as meaningful

associations, and finally information is stored. The bottom-up model also includes identifying the grammatical category of a word and recognizing meaning through word families and word formation. Therefore, relevant strategies are related to sound-letter relationships, or sentence, syntax, and text details, etc. (Wade, 1990; Barnett, 1988; Carrell, 1988). Considering the traits of the bottom-up model, Grabe (1991) comes to a conclusion about less proficient readers. He says that those readers often appear to be word-bound which means that students focus on the meaning of individual words in order to understand a reading text.

Interactive Reading Model

In addition to top-down and bottom-up reading models, the interactive reading model includes both of the models mentioned above, and is argued to be the most dominantly used one in reading activities, especially when “teaching students to activate and use background knowledge” Silberstein (1987, p. 31). Silberstein supports Carrell & Eisterhold’s (1987) views that reading is an interactive process because it is based on the linguistic and background knowledge of the readers. She offers a rationale that an interactive reading model is the result of the interaction of bottom-up and top-down models, because throughout the reading process, the reader tries to decode the information in the text and at the same time s/he makes predictions about it. Therefore, an interactive reading model requires both the contribution of background information as well as linguistic knowledge of the language.

Reading Strategies

As a general definition, strategies are plans applied depending on the type of the text, reader’s purpose, and the context of situation in order to work out problems

confronted in constructing meaning (Duffy, 1993; Wallace 1992). To plan how to solve the problems, various strategies are used during the process of reading. Carrell (1998) defines reading strategies as “actions selected deliberately to achieve particular goals” (p.2). She, particularly referring to reading strategies, further points out that “reading strategies can be virtually impossible to distinguish from other cognitive processes related to thinking, reasoning, studying, or motivational strategies ... reading strategies will include any of a wide array of tactics that readers use to engage and comprehend text” (p.2).

In order to make the most meaning out of a text, the reader applies various reading strategies. From the psycholinguistic perspective, the reader is seen as an active planning, decision-making individual, who coordinates a number of skills and strategies to facilitate comprehension (Silberstein, 1987, p.30). It has also been agreed that pedagogical approach based on the interactive reading model facilitates reading as it encourage the reader to utilize more strategies and thereby to be more successful in comprehending the text (Silberstein, 1987).

Strategies such as metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective are used by the reader in order to facilitate comprehension and enhance learning from the text.

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive knowledge may be defined as knowledge about cognition and self-regulation of it (Baker and Brown, 1984; Grabe, 1991). Grabe (1991) claims that metacognitive strategies involve:

recognizing patterns of structure and organization, and using appropriate strategies to achieve specific goals. (e.g. comprehending text, remembering information, etc.). As related to reading, this would include recognizing the more important information in a text; adjusting reading rate; using context to sort out a misunderstood segment skimming portions of the text; previewing headings,

pictures, and summaries; using search strategies for finding specific information; formulating questions about the information; using a dictionary, using word formation, and affix information to guess word meanings; taking notes; underlining; summarizing information; and so on (p.16).

Baker and Brown (1984) use the following keywords for metacognitive strategies: ‘checking’, ‘monitoring’, ‘testing’, ‘revising’, and ‘evaluating’.

Metacognitive strategies “involve thinking about learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of learning while it is taking place and self-evaluation of learning after learning actively (Brown & Palinscar 1982). In a way, learners who use metacognitive strategies actually monitor their cognitive strategies. Applegate, Quinn and Applegate (1994) go one step further and state that effective readers, who are metacognitively aware, try to match their own concepts and purpose with text details. Such readers test their hypotheses and restate them when necessary.

Metacognition plays a vital role in reading (Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto, 1989). In reading, metacognition involves having conscious knowledge of strategies to use, and being able to control one’s own actions while reading for different purposes.

Anderson (1999) lists various metacognitive strategies as follows:

- Setting goals for yourself to help you improve areas that are important to you;
- Making lists of relevant vocabulary to prepare for new reading;
- Working with classmates to help you develop your reading skills;
- Taking opportunities to practice what you already know to keep your progress steady;
- Evaluating what you have learnt and how well you are doing to help you focus your reading (pp. 82-83).

Cognitive Strategies

To Brown and Palinscar (1982 as cited in Chamot, 1987, p.), cognitive strategies “involve manipulation or transformation of the material to be learned

which the learner interacts with what is to be learnt (72). In a way, “cognitive strategies contribute directly to the solution of a problem” (Schoonen, Hulstijn, & Bossers, 1998, p. 75) and cover most of the strategies in which learners “analyze, synthesize, and transform new information” (Oxford & Ehrman, 1995 as cited in Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995, p.5). Anderson (1999) lists as cognitive reading strategies:

- Predicting the content of an upcoming passage or section of the text;
- Concentrating on grammar to help you understand unfamiliar constructions;
- Understanding the main idea to help you comprehend the entire reading;
- Expanding your vocabulary and grammar to help you increase your reading;
- Guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words or phrases to let you use what you already know about English;
- Analyzing theme, style, and connections to improve your comprehension;
- Distinguishing between opinions and facts in your reading;
- Breaking down larger phrases into smaller parts to help you understand difficult passages;
- Linking what you know in your first language with words in English;
- Creating a map or drawing of related ideas to enable you to understand the relationships between words and ideas;
- Writing a short summary of what you read to help you understand the main ideas (p. 82).

Social/Affective Strategies

Social/affective strategies “concern the ways in which learners select to interact with other learners and native speakers” (Ellis, 1995. p. 538). Weinstein’s (1987) definition of affective strategies includes “using positive self-talk to reduce performance anxiety, finding a quiet place to study, setting a time schedule, using rewards, and setting goals” (p. 593). Such strategies are helpful to students when they face problems during the course of reading. Promoting social/affective strategies in class might prevent possible problems due to affective factors. Since

social/affective strategies are not directly related with the materials, however, those strategies are beyond the scope of this study.

Strategy Training

The common point among virtually all research results in studies about reading strategy training is that even beginning students should be trained in strategies to improve their comprehension and reading performance. Training students on reading strategies is clearly considered crucial and whether implicit or explicit, the benefits of strategy training are largely unargued.

Based on Silberstein's (1987) ideas about reading strategies, implications can be drawn about strategy training in classroom environments. Regardless of the level of the students or of the reading model primarily considered in the classroom, effective reading takes place with the integration of appropriate strategies. Silberstein (1987) says that students should be presented and trained on suitable reading strategies with an appropriate use of materials. Therefore, the teacher's duty should be to foster successful reading and to train students how to employ various reading skills such as extracting the main idea of the text (skimming), getting a particular piece of information (scanning), reaching general understanding, drawing inferences, and so on according to the purpose of the reading. In order to achieve comprehension, students should be introduced to comprehension strategies. Silberstein (1987) argues that such reading strategies can be applied even in beginning level texts. Thus, not only competent readers but also beginning readers with less proficiency should be involved in strategic reading since interaction between text and reader takes place at all levels. Therefore, it can be inferred from Silberstein's argument that strategy training in reading should take place at all levels.

For each level of students, an appropriate strategy can be presented by making use of students' existing knowledge and a suitable reading model.

In the strategy training process, the use of different types of strategies is emphasized. For instance, while teaching a cognitive skill, O'Maley and Chamot (1990) suggest the advantage of incorporating strategies in the task implicitly. Devine (1993) exemplifies the strategic reading process by stating that skimming a text occurs by using a cognitive strategy. The knowledge on how to do it belongs to metacognitive knowledge and "assessing the effectiveness of skimming" to have information clues about the text requires a metacognitive strategy.

Research done on metacognitive strategy training in reading argues that in order to help students use different strategies in a single task, training is a necessary process (Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989). Another research (Anthony & Raphael, 1989, as cited in Shih, 1992) also strongly supports strategy training, but considers strategy training separate from the reading process itself: "research in classroom confirms that the most effective way to bring about student control of a strategy is through an instructional sequence in which independent use is preceded by direct explanation and guided practice" (p. 300). The research further explains independent strategy training emphasizing the role of the teacher in the process. In the first phase, the teacher introduces to the students the strategy and the rationale behind it. Then, the teacher models the strategy through verbalizing the thought process so that students get an idea on how to organize information about the text. After modeling, guided practice proceeds in which the students take more responsibility for utilizing the strategy. The second part entails "repeated practice, feedback, and possible reteaching" (Shih, 1992, p. 301). The final stage is called independent application

where students apply the strategies by themselves. As reflected in the study, teachers model the strategy, monitor and if necessary reteach it. This sequence is similar to one described and recommended by Anderson (1991).

In explicit strategy training students are informed of why a strategy is useful, and how and where to apply it (Fung, Wilkinson & Moore, 1999). Research shows that explicit strategy training can be beneficial, especially when students lack or fail to activate their metacognitive knowledge, and skills to facilitate their reading skills (Anderson, 1999; Anthony & Raphael, 1989 as cited in Shih, 1992; Fung, Wilkinson & Moore, 1999). However, a number of research results (Chamot & O'Maley, 1987, Oxford 1990, Wenden, 1987 as cited in Ely & Pease-Alvarez 1996; O'Maley & Chamot, 1990) recommend the integration of strategy training into language learning tasks on an ongoing basis, in other words, implicit training. They claim that in this way, students digest strategies and long-term retention is encouraged.

Interestingly, Forrester (1997) came up with no difference between implicit and explicit reading strategy teaching in his pilot study carried out in Hong Kong. The research intended to find out to which degree strategies help learners improve their reading performance. He focused in his study on four reading strategies: skimming, scanning, inference, and focusing on cohesive elements of reference, and substitution and conjunction. Two different groups of students were formed and one group received explicit training while the other was given reading strategies implicitly from the same teacher. The groups were given pre- and post-tests. When the results were compared, "no significant difference in grades was shown for either classes" (Forrester, 1997, p.1). The researcher raised many speculations for the lack of significant results such as "combination of methodological and other factors like

shortness of the course, the reading test use, the age and learning background of the students and their poor second language ability and the problematic nature of the value of implications itself” (p.1).

Whether implicit or explicit, the role of the teacher seems to be very important in the strategy training process. Ely and Pease-Alvarez (1996) stress the importance of teachers stating that the teacher in the training process is a crucial channel to help students gain their self-awareness in what they can achieve. He also points out that teachers are “in the best position to empower students by showing them how to empower themselves” (Ely & Pease-Alvarez and Pease-Alvarez , 1996, p. 5). One of the beliefs on strategy training is that it is not just an interesting research topic or area; it is a set of concepts and procedures that any intelligent teacher can use to help students learn more effectively (Oxford, Crookall, Cohen, Lavine, Nyikos, & Sutter, 1990). These beliefs imply that reading strategies can be taught to students, and when taught, strategies help improve students’ performance on tests of comprehension and recall (Carrell, 1985; Carrell, Pharis, &Liberto, 1989; Pearson & Fielding, 1991, as cited in Janzen, 1996). By using strategies, students will be reading in the way that expert readers do. Strategies help readers to process the text actively, to monitor their comprehension, and to connect what they are reading to their own knowledge and to other parts of the text (Janzen, 1996).

Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989) and Cotterall (1990) both argued that the use of metacognitive and cognitive strategy instruction has positive effects on students’ reading comprehension. In their studies, they concluded that students may gain benefit from metacognitive strategy instruction if the program includes it in the curriculum. The study done by Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989) looked at how

reading strategies can be taught and how teaching reading strategies affects students' success in reading. In their research, experimental and control groups were formed. The study was based on the concept of semantic mapping, which included a kind of brainstorming session. During the session, students verbalized what they associated with the reading topic and the teacher put down their ideas on the blackboard. The aim of the semantic mapping through brainstorming sessions was to activate students' background knowledge on the topic of reading text. This would prepare students for the actual reading by giving them a picture of what the text was about. The study suggests that the procedure also helped students learn certain vocabulary items and became more motivated for reading. During the post-reading stage, the semantic map on the blackboard was used for discussion to help students build the bridge between known and new. After training, the students were given post-tests, on which the experimental group performed much better than the control group.

In line with the beliefs indicated on reading strategies in the above studies but in a longer study than the one or two-week training sessions on metacognitive awareness conducted by Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989), Auerbach and Paxton (1997) designed a semester-long course to help students explore and discover their existing strategies, reflect on them, and develop them. The course involved pre-reading, during-reading, post-reading, and vocabulary strategies. The rationale of the research relied on an interactive understanding, in which the reader recalls pre-existing knowledge to identify text structure and reads interactively by using both bottom-up and top-down reading. The study was also based on the argument that effective L2 reading does not rely solely on the level of the proficiency in the second language. Even if the level of proficiency is low, students still depend on word-for-

word reading (bottom-up) or they can predict about the content using schemata (top-down) or combine both (interactive). In addition, the study took into account knowledge of using strategies consciously, or in other words, metacognitive awareness (Block, 1986; Carrell, Pharis & Liberto, 1989; Cohen & Hosenfeld, 1981; Devine, 1993 as cited in Auerbah & Paxton, 1997).

At the beginning of the course, students were given a questionnaire to investigate their ideas about reading and L2 reading, strategy awareness, and comprehension assessment. Students were asked a set of questions about a text they had read in order to learn the “strategies the students used, their ability to articulate them, and their prior knowledge about the subject” (p. 243). The aim of the reading interviews was to learn students’ approaches to a text. The reading inventory aimed at finding out students’ choices and reasons for reading in L1. Additionally, the aim of giving reading strategy questionnaires in both the L1 and L2 was to get a broader general understanding of students’ reading and strategies (pp. 242-243).

The findings of the strategy conception questionnaire given at the beginning of the course indicated that students varied in their use and concept of strategies. As the course progressed, strategies were elicited from students and as they developed their awareness of their own existing strategies, they were invited to introduce them to their peers. The researchers monitored the changes in the use of students’ strategies and they observed that as they progressed, students gained more control, thus becoming more conscious of which strategies to use according to the type of the text. As one of the students said:

During the course I feel like I am shopping in the store and strategies are like the clothes in the store. I am free to choose any clothes (strategy) I want to choose. I just have to buy one or two clothes

(strategy) that is really fit (work) to me and the one that I mostly like (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997 p. 247).

Drawing out students' conceptions of strategies, eliciting students' actually used strategies, giving strategy instruction, and interviewing students, could have been the effective factors that contributed to students' awareness, choice, and control in strategy use. The research concludes that through strategy training, students can become aware of their existing strategies, expand their choice of strategies, and have control over their use of them, thus increasing overall comprehension and recall. Students become involved in exploring their own conception of reading strategies and applying them in their reading. Similar to Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto's (1989) study, the findings of Auerbach and Paxton (1997) indicate that students can be trained to use several strategies and they can gain metacognitive awareness by monitoring, controlling, and choosing the use of appropriate reading strategies. Auerbach and Paxton (1997) conclude by emphasizing that metacognitive awareness in reading and strategy training enhances reading proficiency.

In addition to studies investigating the impact of strategy training on only L2 students, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) carried out a study in which they looked at and contrasted the use of reading strategies of both native and non-native English speakers with reading academic materials. The results of this study revealed three major outcomes, one of which was that both native and non-native students were aware of their own reading strategies. Moreover, both groups attributed almost the same order of importance to categorizations of reading strategies in the survey, regardless of their reading ability or gender. Among metacognitive, cognitive and support reading strategies as they were grouped in the survey, both native and non-native students with higher reading abilities reported more frequent usage of

metacognitive and cognitive strategies than “lower-reading-ability” students. Moreover, among native speaking students, those of “higher-reading-ability” indicated that they place a higher value on support strategies than “lower-reading-ability” students. However, ESL students indicated that they use support strategies more than metacognitive and cognitive strategies, regardless of their reading ability level.

Turning from students to teachers on the subject of strategy training, Ely and Pease-Alvarez ’s (1996) study shows that teachers should also be trained on how to train students in the most efficient ways. In his study, he established a teacher-training program in order to prepare second language teachers’ for strategy instruction. The establishment of such training/development programs for second language teachers revealed that teachers value strategy training and they would like to do their best in class. Ely and Pease-Alvarez ’s study proposed two models to help in teacher preparation for strategy instruction. One model of teacher training involved teachers being trained on appropriate instruction and the other model aimed at preparing teachers for development and to heighten their ability to “observe, reflect upon and modify their instructional patterns” (Ely & Pease-Alvarez , 1996, p. 336).

In Ely and Pease-Alvarez ’s proposed teacher-training program on strategy instruction, teachers prepare lessons, present them in class, and get immediate peer feedback. The program’s major underlying theme is the development or sharpening of independent and analytical thoughts related to the cognitive (psychological and linguistic) and affective thought processes of learner and teacher. During the program, teachers were let to discover the importance of strategy training in ESL

instruction in an introspective manner. Teachers discuss the given task, and consider appropriate strategies. In a task on reading, teachers admitted the advantages of utilizing strategies such as:

the amount of time that one could save; the way the reader avoided getting bogged down by details; the fact that one could use strategies to determine the appropriateness the reading material for one's reading purposes; and the possibility that the strategy could serve the reader as an advance organizer, a kind of road map for subsequent reading (p.338).

However, the teachers in Ely and Pease-Alvarez 's study admitted that for the most part, they were not taught strategies, and the ones that were taught went unpracticed. The teachers argued that the reason for not employing strategies themselves was the result of insufficient practice, awareness, the fear of missing important points in a given task if those strategies could be used, and being undecided about which strategy to utilize according to which purpose. (Ely & Pease-Alvarez , 1996). The program suggests that it is important not only to teach strategies to students but also to develop an understanding of why and when students should use those strategies both at present and in the future.

The results of Ely and Pease-Alvarez 's program of strategy training instruction display that in order to provide their students with both the ability and the understanding required for intelligent control of their own learning, teachers should have a strong understanding of the theory and practice of strategy teaching as well as an understanding of how to implement, adapt and develop these strategies in their own instruction.

Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Strategies

As teachers' perceptions of strategy training in reading instruction is the focus point of this study, similarly focused studies were also examined. The

literature, however, is not rich in studies done on teachers' perceptions specifically of reading strategies, how they perceive those strategies and how they teach them.

One project (Allan & Bruton, 1998) that did explore teachers' perceptions on teaching reading and reading strategies to support reading development was carried out in a context in which many teachers made explicit their concerns about those students who had difficulty in deriving meaning from written text. The study aimed at finding out whether strategies are obvious to students, and if they are not, whether students are taught strategies. Also, the study aimed to find out teachers' understanding of the reading process and the teaching of reading skills/strategies.

The research was conducted in three secondary schools in Scotland. Because of the small population, the findings of research could not be generalized. The results showed that many teachers in the study had considerable knowledge and understanding of how to develop reading skills. Although teachers stated their major problem in reading as vocabulary teaching, they indicated teaching some reading strategies such as, text-highlighting, sequencing, prediction, close-procedure, text-completion (Allan & Bruton, 1998, p.4). One teacher stated that she teaches the strategies she employs in order to cope with the difficulty of a text: "I'd have to try to find a way to squeeze the juice from the text, which is what I was taught when I was young... You have to give students strategies for extracting the juice, so they won't panic and give up..." (Allan & Bruton, 1998, p.6).

During the interviews conducted for the study, it was also revealed that teachers were very knowledgeable when reflecting on their classroom practice and their own reading strategies. Among the findings of the study, there is a parallel with the use of strategies by teachers as readers and the way they teach strategies in their

own classes. Although teachers were concerned that they were not knowledgeable about reading and teaching reading skills, through the course of the study it was revealed that they themselves knew more than they had taught. The study implies that if teachers make their own reading strategies explicit in class, the reflection may help students improve their reading.

Conclusion

To conclude, this review of the literature suggests that the use of reading strategies is an important element in reading instruction and that in order to help students comprehend text, certain training in reading strategies should be given to both students and teachers. As well as training students on reading strategies, raising students' awareness of their already existing strategies and having them use those strategies consciously is another important issue in strategy training.

In the next chapter, the research tools and the methodological procedures followed in order to gather the data will be discussed. Additionally, information about the setting and the participants will be provided.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions of reading strategy instruction at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages (EMU SFL). The study aimed at exploring the teachers' understandings of teaching reading strategies through the use of the course materials. It was hoped that this study would also reveal information about the presentation of reading strategies in these materials, and thereby, contribute to more fruitful outcomes in the teaching of reading and reading strategies.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) What are teachers' understandings and perceptions of reading strategies and the purposes for teaching them?
- 2) According to teachers' self-reports,
 - a. What reading strategies (if any) do they teach?
 - b. How do they decide which strategies to teach?
 - c. How do they make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies?

In this chapter, the methodological procedures for this study are presented. First, the background of the methodology for this study is mentioned. Then, the participants of the study and the setting in which the study was conducted are described. Lastly, the data collection instruments and the ways the data were collected and analyzed are presented.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages (EMU SFL). The education offered at EMU SFL is based on a modular system. Each semester is divided into two modules and each module lasts for eight weeks. Students are placed at appropriate levels from beginner to intermediate at the beginning of the academic year. They take a level test at the end of every eight weeks, and those who score 60 or above move up one level. At the end of the first semester, students who complete the intermediate level along with those who have not exceeded a 30% absenteeism limit in the upper-intermediate level, have the right to take the proficiency test to enter into their departments. After each level test, the groups of students change. Likewise, the teachers change the groups they teach every module. The spring semester starts with the third module. This study was conducted during the third module. The questionnaire was administered in the fourth week of the module and the interviews were done in the eighth week.

The participants of this study were the 46 teachers of the intermediate level. Nine of the participants were male and 38 of them were female. The questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed on April 3rd, 2002, during the weekly Teaching Team Meeting and the participants were asked to return the questionnaire within a week. Out of 46 teachers, 33 returned the questionnaire. After the analysis of the questionnaire, six of the participants were chosen according to the diversity of the answers they gave on the questionnaire.

Questionnaires

In order to gather general data from all the participants, a questionnaire was utilized. The questionnaire was chosen because it is easier and more practical to

gather data from a large population as they have a high range of coverage (O'Maley & Chamot, 1990). Davidson (as cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994) states the traits of a well-designed questionnaire as "clear, unambiguous, and uniformly workable" (p. 92). If a high quality questionnaire is designed, it is more likely that a researcher will obtain the most accurate data. The questionnaire also should be unbiased and not leading the participant to the expected answer. Because they are believed to be useful instruments especially in determining opinions and attitudes, Likert-type questionnaire items were used in part III, IV, and IV (Turner, 1993). Such type questions were thought to be most effective in measuring the participants' perceptions of reading strategies and how they make use of the materials to teach those strategies.

The questionnaire for this study consisted of four parts. The first part aimed at gathering background information about the participants: their names, gender, years of teaching experience, years of teaching experience at EMU SFL, and degree program(s) completed.

The second part of the questionnaire referred to the first research question, which was "what are teachers' understandings and perceptions of reading strategies and the purpose for teaching them?" In this part of the questionnaire, participants were asked three questions. The first question aimed at learning the participants' self-assessed degree of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies. The second question was an open-ended question, which asked the participants to list the various strategies they teach in their reading instruction. The third question was comprised of a list of reasons for teaching reading strategies and the participants were asked to tick

all that applied to them. Also, teachers were provided with an option where they could write their reasons apart from the written options given.

The third part of the questionnaire referred to research question 2a, which was “what reading strategies (if any) do they teach?” Part III was comprised of 37 Likert-type questions in which the participants were asked to tick only one option according to the degree of frequency they teach various reading strategies at various phases of a lesson. The response options were ‘always’, ‘usually’, ‘sometimes’, ‘rarely’, and ‘never’.

Parts IV and V of the questionnaire were designed in order to get some preliminary data as a starting point for the interviews. Part IV aimed at finding out how frequently they make use of the materials to teach reading strategies, and consisted of eight Likert-type items. Part V was aimed at gathering teachers’ perceptions of the materials in terms of the degree of reading strategies they foster. In this part, participants were asked four opinion type questions and were asked to tick one option among ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘neutral’, ‘disagree’, and ‘strongly disagree’.

Table 1 below shows the number of the questions in the questionnaire and the focus of each part.

Table 1

Distribution of Questions on the Questionnaire

| Question Types | Part I- Background Information | Part II- Teachers' degree of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies | Part III- What reading strategies the teachers teach | Part IV- What materials the teachers use to teach reading strategies | Part V – How they perceive the presentation of reading strategies in the course books |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| No. of Questions | 5 | 3 | 37 | 8 | 4 |

Piloting the Questionnaire

In order to make sure that the items in the questionnaire were clear, understandable, and would not prejudice the teachers' perceptions, the questionnaire was piloted on March 19, 2002, with the students enrolled in the MA TEFL program and with the instructors teaching in the same program. Their constructive feedback was taken into consideration in the process of rewording items, adding new ones, modifying ambiguous wordings, and deleting the items that were irrelevant to the purpose of the study. Additionally, grammatical mistakes were corrected and instructions were modified. For this reason, the pilot study proved to be very beneficial. Since parts III and IV aimed at gathering teachers' perceptions of the course materials and the reading strategies presented in those materials, it was impossible to pilot parts IV and V with the colleagues at the Bilkent MA TEFL program. Therefore, nine teachers who taught at the intermediate level in the second module at EMU SFL were also e-mailed the questionnaire on March 28, 2002. They were asked to make comments on those parts in particular and return them by March

29, 2002. Out of nine questionnaires e-mailed, four questionnaires were received, on the basis of which the final changes were made.

Distribution of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was e-mailed to a colleague at EMU SFL on April 1, 2002 and a request form was also filled in and e-mailed to the head of the teacher-training department at EMU SFL. The questionnaire was approved by the council of EMU SFL on the same day and distributed to the intermediate level Teaching Teams on April 4, 2002 during the Teaching Team Meeting. During the meeting, teachers received the questionnaire with the necessary information about the purpose of the study and the preparation of the questionnaire, and were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them later to the team leaders soon after they filled them in. Out of 46 teachers, 33 returned the questionnaires. The data was entered into the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) program at EMU SFL and sent to the researcher through e-mail. Later on, the questionnaire was sent to the researcher via mail. Both the data sent through e-mail and the open-ended questions were analyzed by the researcher.

Interviews

For this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Meriam (1998) indicates that semi-structured interviews “are guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time” (p.74). The aim of designing semi-structured interviews for this study was to allow the participants to state their ideas and provide room for them to explain their reasons on how they decide which strategy to teach and how

they make use of certain reading materials in order to incorporate those strategies in detail.

The interview questions were prepared by considering a typical reading lesson. For example, questions were generated in order to gather data on whether or how teachers make use of titles, pictures, or any other aids in order to prepare students for actual reading, whether they employ particular strategies to facilitate students' comprehension of texts while reading, or whether they assign any activities after completing the reading. Additionally, how teachers do what they do and why they do such activities were the follow-up questions for most of the items. In order to prepare more realistic and consistent questions, various reading texts in the Headway course book and intermediate pack were used as reference points to structure the interviews.

Piloting the Interviews

For the interview, a number of semi-structured questions were prepared. As a first step, two reading texts were chosen from the Headway course book and two peers who are enrolled in the MA TEFL program were asked to participate in the piloting of the interview. Prior to the pilot interviews, the peers were given the reading texts with their tasks in order to have them familiarize themselves with the texts. During the piloting the advisor took notes and immediate feedback was given.

Teacher Interviews

After analyzing the data gathered from the questionnaires, six teachers were chosen for the interview according to the diversity of answers they gave. The following criteria were considered while choosing the six participants for the interview:

- degree of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies (questionnaire part II question 1);
- degree of frequency of the reading strategies taught (questionnaire, part III);
- diversity of reported perceptions of the reading strategies presented in the course books (questionnaire parts IV & V).

The aim of the interview was to get in-depth answers to the following research questions:

- 3) According to teacher's self-reports,
 - b. What reading strategies (if any) do they teach?
 - c. How do they decide which strategy to teach?
 - d. How do they make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies?

In order to select the participants for the interview, teachers who reported different degrees of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies were separated. While no one reported being completely unfamiliar with reading strategies, two teachers said that they were only 'slightly' familiar with reading strategies and those two teachers (P1 & P2) were selected for interviews. Among the 33 participants, seven teachers reported that they were 'very' familiar with the concept of reading strategies. Among these seven teachers, two were chosen for the interview. To choose those two teachers, their answers in Parts III, IV, and V were considered. One of the teachers chosen for the interview (P5) reported frequent use for almost all the reading strategies including pre-, while, and post- reading strategies in part III. Yet in part IV, P5 stated only 'sometimes' using the materials provided in the Headway

course book and the intermediate pack to teach reading strategies. It was curiosity to find out why P5 does not tend to make use of the materials to teach reading strategies that led to the selection of this participant. Unlike P5, the next participant (P6) reported less frequent use of reading strategies in part III and less frequent use of the materials presented in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack in part IV. Among the 24 teachers who reported 'somewhat' familiarity with the concept of reading strategies, two teachers were selected to be interviewed. One of the participants (P3), stated discontent with the reading strategies presented in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack in part V of the questionnaire, yet nevertheless, reported high frequent use of reading strategies presented in part III. The final participant was the one who reported high frequent use of pre-reading strategies in part III of the questionnaire compared to post-reading strategies. This participant remained 'neutral' about the distribution of the reading strategies in part V.

A total of 14 interview questions (Appendix D) were prepared for the teachers, but since the interview was semi-structured, additional questions were asked to the participants according to the answers received. In addition to the common questions prepared for the participants, additional questions were directed to them referring to the specific answers they gave in the questionnaire.

All interviewees were given a consent form (Appendix C) to sign prior to the interview. For the interview, a number of reading texts were selected both in the Headway intermediate course book and the intermediate pack (Appendix E). Prior to the interview, participants were asked to choose two texts that they had used in class. The interviews consisted largely of the teachers going through their chosen lesson

texts and explaining to the interviewer what they would or would not do at each step, and why or why not they would make those choices. During the interviews, participants were asked how and why questions referring to the answers they gave in the questionnaire part III, IV, and V in order to get more detailed information. The number of the questions asked to the participants varied because of the nature of the interview. Additionally, the questionnaires that the interviewees had filled in were used as references during the interviews. When necessary, their answers to certain items in the questionnaires were referred to as they responded to related questions during the interviews. The interviews were carried out in English.

Data Analysis

In this study, quantitative data were collected through questionnaires and qualitative data were gathered through interviews. The questionnaire allowed the researcher to gather information about teachers' understanding and perception of reading strategies and the purposes for teaching them. The questionnaire also enabled the researcher to obtain preliminary data about how teachers make use of the materials and their perceptions about the reading strategies presented in the course books. The interviews, on the other hand, were conducted in order to obtain detailed information about how teachers decide which strategies to teach and how they make use of the materials to teach reading strategies.

The questionnaire was prepared by the researcher and was piloted with the students enrolled in the MA TEFL program and the teachers who taught at the intermediate level at EMU SFL during the second module of the 2001-2002 academic year. Parts I and II of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions and they were analyzed through categorization of the responses. The items in parts

III, IV, and V of the questionnaire were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). For every item, frequencies and percentages were taken. In order to find the significance of the distribution of answers for each item, Chi-square tests were calculated.

The interviews were taped and transcribed by the researcher. The transcript data were first categorized according to the activities in three phases of reading instruction called as pre-, while, and post-reading. These phases were analyzed on a cross-sectional basis (Mason, 1996). In other words, the practices and rationale behind these three phases of reading instruction were compared among the six interviewees' transcriptions. Furthermore, non-cross sectional analysis of individual transcripts also revealed additional and unexpected themes.

In the next chapter, the data analysis procedures and the results will be discussed in detail. In addition, significant results, both quantitative and qualitative, will be displayed in tables.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions of strategy training in reading instruction. The participants of this study were 46 teachers who were teaching at the intermediate level at EMU SFL, in the third module of the 2001-2002 academic year. As a first research tool, 46 teachers were distributed questionnaires, 33 of which were returned. As a second means of data collection, six teachers were selected according to the diversity of answers they gave in the questionnaire, and interviewed individually.

The first part of the questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively. Frequencies and percentages were taken. The second part was analyzed through categorization. The third, fourth, and fifth parts were analyzed quantitatively using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and percentages of every question were taken. Additionally, Chi-squares were calculated in order to see whether the distribution of the answers for each question was significant.

For the interview, six participants were chosen. Basically, the participants were selected according to the degree of familiarity with the concepts of reading strategies they reported. According to this primary criteria, two of the participants were 'slightly' familiar with the concept of reading strategies, the second pair were the ones who reported as being 'somewhat' familiar with the concept of reading strategies, and the last two were chosen among the participants who said that they were very familiar with the concept of reading strategies.

Data Analysis Procedure

Analysis of the Questionnaire

Questionnaire Part I

In the first part of the questionnaire, the aim was to get some background information about the 33 participants, among whom 28 were female and five were male. Table 2 below displays the range of the teachers' total years of teaching experience and the years of teaching experience they have had at EMU SFL. Five of the 33 participants who returned the questionnaire indicated 1-4 years of total teaching experience, 15 of them indicated 5-8 years of teaching experience, and 10 of the participants ticked 9-12 years of teaching experience. Two teachers stated 13-16 years of teaching experience, and one respondent indicated 17 or more years of teaching experience.

Table 2

Participants' Teaching Experiences

| Total years of teaching experience | F | P | Years at EMU SFL. | F | P |
|------------------------------------|----|--------|-------------------|----|--------|
| 1-4 | 5 | 15.2% | 1-4 | 6 | 18.2% |
| 5-8 | 15 | 45.5% | 5-8 | 16 | 48.5% |
| 9-12 | 10 | 30.3% | 9-12 | 11 | 33.3% |
| 13-16 | 2 | 6.1% | 13-16 | 0 | 0 |
| 17 + | 1 | 3.0% | 17 + | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 33 | 100.0% | Total | 33 | 100.0% |

Note. F= frequency

P= percentage

The majority of participants chose one of three options when they were asked about their teaching experiences at EMU SFL. Just six participants indicated having only 1-4 years of teaching experience. Sixteen teachers stated 5-8 years of teaching

experience at EMU SFL and 11 participants indicated 9-12 years of teaching experience at EMU SFL.

The results show that the teachers who taught at the intermediate level during the third module could be counted as ‘experienced teachers’, both in terms of their total teaching experience and their teaching experience at EMU SFL. As is seen in table 2, 28 of the 33 respondents (81%) have at least five years of teaching experience and 27 of the 33 respondents (more than 80%) have indicated at least five years of experience teaching at EMU SFL. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that the teachers are familiar with the education system in general and with the curriculum of EMU SFL in particular.

Table 3 below presents the information about completed degree programs of the participants.

Table 3

Degree Programs Completed by the Participants

| <u>Degree completed</u> | <u>F</u> | <u>P</u> |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| BA | 21 | 63.6% |
| MA | 11 | 33.3% |
| MBA | 1 | 3.0% |
| Total | 33 | 100.0% |

Note. F= frequency

P= percentage

As is seen in the above table, only 12 of the participants indicated having a post-graduate degree, one of which was an MBA. The remainder of the participants specified having only BA degrees.

Questionnaire Part II

The second part of the questionnaire sought to answer the first research question, which was “What are teachers’ understandings and perceptions of reading strategies and the purpose for teaching them?”

The first question was about the teachers’ self-assessed degree of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies. Table 4 below shows the results for this question.

Table 4

Q.1 How Familiar are You with the Concept of Reading Strategies?

| | F | P |
|----------|----|--------|
| Very | 7 | 21.2% |
| Somewhat | 24 | 72.7% |
| Slightly | 2 | 6.1% |
| Total | 33 | 100.0% |

Note. F= frequency
P= percentage

The results of the first question show that most teachers did not rate themselves as being ‘very’ familiar with the concept of reading strategies. Among 33 participants, only seven of them ticked the ‘very’ option. Twenty-four of the participants, in other words, the majority, said that they are ‘somewhat’ familiar with the concept of reading strategies, and two of the respondents ticked the ‘slightly’ option. None of the teachers indicated the ‘not at all’ option for this question. The results show that all the teachers reported having at least heard about reading strategies and having some ideas about them.

The second question was an open-ended question. Participants were asked to list any particular reading strategies they teach in class. The results as they were

written on the questionnaires are included in their entirety in Appendix B and a categorized summary of their responses is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5

Q. 2 Please List any Particular Reading Strategies You Teach in Class

| Strategies | No. |
|---|-----|
| Skimming | 23 |
| Scanning | 23 |
| Pre-discussions (Discussion & prediction about the content through the use of titles, pictures, aids, etc.) | 8 |
| Guessing meaning from the context | 7 |
| Asking referential questions | 3 |
| Pre-teaching the vocabulary | 2 |
| Discussion after reading | 2 |
| Note-taking | 2 |
| Activating schemata | 1 |
| Reading for inference | 1 |
| Reading for prediction | 1 |

As can be seen in table 5, by far the most commonly reported strategies are skimming and scanning. Also, fairly commonly reported were pre-discussions such as discussion and prediction about the content through the use of titles, pictures, aids and guessing meaning from the context. A variety of other strategies received mention by only one or two participants.

Apart from particular reading strategies listed by the participants, some teachers referred to reading some activities, which cannot clearly be considered as reading strategies. These were using comprehension questions to set the aim when reading the text, matching headings and paragraphs, asking T/F statements, jigsaw reading, and using realia. Since these are activities rather than reading strategies, they were not included in the table above. Those teachers might have misconceptions about reading strategies.

The answers reveal that teachers are quite familiar with at least two reading strategies, which they identified as skimming and scanning. Several referred to various pre-reading strategies such as activating students' background knowledge by generating discussions. Some reported that they make use of the pictures and the headlines presented in the course books. Only two participants, however, mentioned any post-reading strategies specifically. They further indicated that they generated discussions after reading activities as a post-reading strategy.

After asking the participants to list the reading strategies that they particularly teach, they were asked about the reasons why they teach those reading strategies. The third question of part II (see table 6 below) aimed at finding out the teachers' reported reasons for teaching reading strategies. In this question, participants were presented various reasons for teaching reading strategies, from which they could select as many as they felt were applicable. They were also given an extra option where they could state their personal reasons, if any, other than the ones presented.

Table 6

Q.3 What are Your Reasons for Teaching Reading Strategies in Class?

| Items | No. of respondents |
|---|--------------------|
| A- It helps students understand text better. | 33 |
| B- To improve their enjoyment of the texts. | 19 |
| C- Because they are included in the pack. | 6 |
| D- To develop subskills for developing overall reading skills | 28 |
| E- For the appreciation of the text. | 6 |
| F- To have students be aware of the language they are learning. | 12 |
| G- To save time while reading. | 17 |
| H- To prepare students for the text. | 19 |
| I- To prepare them for outside reading. | 23 |
| J- To enhance autonomy. | 20 |

As is seen in table 6, all the participants agree that teaching reading strategies helps students understand texts better and almost all of them report teaching reading strategies in order to help students develop subskills for developing overall reading skills. Also, during the interviews, out of six teachers, four stated that teaching reading strategies helps students' speaking and writing, especially through the use of pre- and post-reading strategies. They stated the necessity of tying those skills together as the institution follows an integrated syllabus. Therefore, students should be encouraged to practice other skills through reading and strategy training. What teachers pointed out is related with what the research in the literature suggests. Research suggests that if the strategy training is integrated in learning tasks on an ongoing basis, students digest strategies and long-term retention is encouraged (Chamot & O'Maley, 1987; Oxford 1990; Wenden, 1987 as cited in Ely & Pease-Alvarez, 1996; O'Maley & Chamot, 1990).

Out of 33 participants, 23 said that reading strategies prepare students for outside reading, and similarly, 20 of them reported teaching reading strategies in order to enhance autonomy. These answers seem to mean that teachers consider it important to train students in how to deal with any kind of reading text they might eventually be exposed to. Nineteen teachers indicated that teaching reading strategies is essential for preparing students for the text and for improving the students' appreciation of the text. Out of 33 participants, only one respondent (P2) gave a reason other than the ones provided, which was "to guide them (make it useful/fun) for teaching reading strategies."

Questionnaire Part III

The purpose of the third part of the questionnaire was to find out what reading strategies teachers report actually teaching. In this part, the participants were presented 37 Likert-type items and then asked to rate the teaching practices presented in this part in consideration of what they actually do while dealing with a reading text in class.

Table 7 below presents the results for the items that are considered as pre-reading strategies. The general impression is that the teachers do most of the pre-reading activities in class before they have students read the text. It is clearly seen that almost all the teachers (at least 80%) usually or always set a purpose for reading, make use of the titles and the pictures in order to help students predict about the text, and set a context before actual reading. From the distribution of the answers, it is seen that the use of instructional aids is not common among the teachers. However, more than half of the participants (54.5%) use previewing techniques sometimes and they report making frequent use of (almost 88%) warm-up questions before having students read the text.

Table 7

Items Related to Pre-Reading Strategies

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| Q.1 | 17 (51.5%) | 13 (39.4%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 9.46** |
| Q.2 | 14 (42.4%) | 14 (42.4%) | 5 (15.2%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 4.91 |
| Q.3 | 9 (27.3%) | 20 (60.6%) | 4 (12.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 12.18** |
| Q.4 | 13 (39.4%) | 13 (39.4%) | 4 (12.1%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 11.00* |
| Q.5 | 2 (6.1%) | 12 (36.4%) | 13 (39.4%) | 6 (18.2%) | 0 (0.0%) | 9.79* |
| Q.6 | 2 (6.1%) | 6 (18.2%) | 18 (54.5%) | 5 (15.2%) | 2 (6.1%) | 26.55** |
| Q.7 | 16 (48.5%) | 13 (39.4%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (3.0%) | 21.75** |
| Q.8 | 4 (12.1%) | 12 (36.4%) | 14 (42.4%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 13.00** |
| Q.9 | 6 (18.2%) | 8 (24.2%) | 12 (36.4%) | 2 (6.1%) | 3 (9.1%) | 10.45* |
| Q.10 | 4 (12.1%) | 8 (24.2%) | 20 (60.6%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 13.00** |

Note. Q.1: I set a purpose for reading.

Q.2: I ask students to read the titles and predict what the text is about.

Q.3: I ask students to look at illustrations/pictures and try to guess how they relate to the text.

Q.4: I set a context before students begin reading.

Q.5: I use instructional aids (e.g. realia, music, etc.) to set a context.

Q.6: I have the students quickly look over the text before reading.

Q.7: I ask students warm-up questions related to the text before reading.

Q.8: I teach vocabulary before students read the text.

Q.9: Before doing discussion or any other activity, I have students read the text.

Q.10: I ask students to relate the text/topic to their experience.

χ^2 = Chi-square

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

The findings for questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 were all found to be significant on a Chi-square test. Numbers 4, 5, and 9 were significant at a level of

$p < .05$ and 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 10 were found to be significant at a level of $p < .01$.

According to these results, it can be assumed that instruction in pre-reading strategies is a widespread, common part of these teachers' teaching practices. The possible reasons might be that such pre-reading activities are widely included in the reading

materials in the intermediate pack. Also, teachers instinctively might feel the necessity of providing students with a purpose and motivating them through several activities for actual reading. For this reason, such pre-reading activities seen as warm-up activities and certain pre-reading strategies are utilized during the process.

Table 8 below presents the results about teachers' vocabulary teaching practices. The results show that teachers do generally pre-teach vocabulary before reading. However, they do not tend to teach the entire new vocabulary in a reading text.

Table 8

Questions Related to Vocabulary Teaching

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Q.8 | 4 (12.1%) | 12 (36.4%) | 14 (42.4%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 13.00** |
| Q.13 | 1 (3.00%) | 6 (18.2%) | 8 (24.2%) | 9 (27.3%) | 9 (27.3%) | 6.85 |

Note. Q.8: I teach vocabulary before students read the text.

Q.13: I teach all the new vocabulary in the text.

χ^2 : Chi-square

** $p < .01$

The Chi-square results presented in the table above show that the responses to question 8 are significant at a level of $p < .01$. The significant result for this question shows that almost all the teachers teach vocabulary before they have students read the text. However, the results for teaching all the new vocabulary is more evenly divided and therefore, not significant. From the results, it can be assumed that the majority of the teachers tend to teach only the 'necessary' vocabulary. This practice is in line with arguments in the literature in that preparing students for actual reading does not mean to teach students 'all' the unknown words but to teach them 'necessary' vocabulary. Such an approach, it is proposed, helps the students deal

with the text without being frustrated with language difficulties (Greenwood, 1989 as cited in Sarıçoban, 2001).

The following discussion is about the use of mono and bilingual dictionaries in reading instruction. The results for these questions are presented in table 9 below.

Table 9

Questions Related to the Use of Dictionaries

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
| Q.14 | 7 (21.2%) | 14 (42.4%) | 5 (15.2%) | 3 (9.1%) | 4 (12.1%) | 11.70* |
| Q.15 | 6 (18.2%) | 7 (21.2%) | 8 (24.2%) | 10 (30.3%) | 2 (6.1%) | 5.33 |

Note. Q.14: I ask students to use a monolingual dictionary.

Q.15: I allow students to use a bilingual dictionary.

χ^2 = Chi-square

* $p < .05$

As seen in the above table, question 14 is about the use of monolingual dictionaries and question 15 is about the use of bilingual dictionaries in reading instruction. The Chi-square results show the responses to question 14 to be significant at a level of $p < .05$, which suggests that most of the teachers tend to prefer that their students use monolingual dictionaries rather than bilingual ones. The results for question 15, however, are not significant, which may suggest that the teachers are either flexible about the use of bilingual dictionaries or they do not see any harm in using them. Since this issue was not explored deeper during the interviews, the rationale behind their responses was not revealed.

After the discussion of teachers' use of pre-reading strategies, the succeeding discussion is about the while-reading strategy practices of teachers in their reading instruction. All the while-reading strategies items in part III of the questionnaire are presented in table 10 below, along with the frequencies and the Chi-square results.

Table 10

Items Related to While-Reading Strategies

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| Q.16 | 10 (30.3%) | 17 (51.5%) | 5 (15.2%) | 1 (3.00%) | 0 (0.0%) | 17.30** |
| Q.17 | 9 (27.3%) | 17 (51.5%) | 7 (21.2%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 5.09 |
| Q.18 | 1 (3.00%) | 5 (15.2%) | 18 (54.5%) | 7 (21.2%) | 2 (6.1%) | 28.06** |
| Q.19 | 4 (12.1%) | 11 (33.3%) | 13 (39.4%) | 3 (9.1%) | 2 (6.1%) | 15.33** |
| Q.20 | 3 (9.1%) | 16 (48.5%) | 11 (33.3%) | 2 (6.1%) | 1 (3.00%) | 26.24** |
| Q.21 | 1 (3.00%) | 6 (18.2%) | 12 (36.4%) | 9 (27.3%) | 5 (15.2%) | 10.49* |
| Q.22 | 3 (9.1%) | 12 (36.4%) | 9 (27.3%) | 8 (24.2%) | 1 (3.00%) | 12.30* |
| Q.23 | 1 (3.00%) | 2 (6.1%) | 9 (27.3%) | 9 (27.3%) | 12 (36.4%) | 14.12** |
| Q.26 | 1 (3.00%) | 11 (33.3%) | 17 (51.5%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 20.50** |
| Q.27 | 2 (6.1%) | 2 (6.1%) | 8 (24.2%) | 14 (42.4%) | 7 (21.2%) | 15.03** |
| Q.28 | 0 (0.0%) | 5 (15.2%) | 11 (33.3%) | 14 (42.4%) | 3 (9.1%) | 9.55* |

Note. Q.16: I teach students how to guess the meaning of unknown words.

Q.17: I ask students to guess/predict the meaning of unknown words.

Q.18: I tell the students to skip unknown words.

Q.19: I ask students to underline unknown words.

Q.20: I ask students to underline key words and/or phrases.

Q.21: I ask students to take notes while reading.

Q.22: I tell students to read carefully and slowly.

Q.23: I stress the importance of reading every word.

Q.26: I tell students to make guesses about up-coming information in the text.

Q.27: I have students read aloud in class one at a time.

Q.28: I teach students to read the first and the last paragraphs more carefully.

χ^2 = Chi-square

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 10 presents the results for questions 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, and 28, which are about the instruction of while-reading strategies. Except for question 17, the findings for all these questions were found to be significant on a

Chi-square test. Questions 21, 22, and 28 were significant at a level of $p < .05$ and questions 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 26, and 27 were found to be significant at a level of $p < .01$. The results reveal clear findings about teachers' teaching of while-reading strategies.

The results for questions 16 and 17 are interesting. Those questions are about guessing the meaning of unknown words. The Chi-square calculation is significant at the level of $p < .05$ for question 16. For this question, 81.8% of the teachers report that they always or usually teach students how to guess the meaning of unknown words. Similarly, 78.8% of the teachers report that they always or usually ask students to guess/predict the meaning of unknown words. The Chi-square calculation remains negligible for question 17 because none of the teachers reported 'rarely' or 'never' asking their students to do this. Nevertheless, it can be confidently said that the participants do include the mentioned strategies in their teaching practices.

For question 18, which was about instructing students to skip unknown words as a strategy, the Chi-square calculation is significant at the level of $p < .01$. However, since the majority of the participants (54.5%) reported that they tell students to skip unknown words 'sometimes', it cannot be said that this is a frequent teaching practice. Similarly, despite a significant Chi-square result for question 19, it cannot be said that teachers frequently include underlining unknown words in their teaching reading strategies instruction because again, the majority of the participants (39.4%) reported only that they 'sometimes' ask students to underline unknown words. However, a majority of the teachers (57.6%) responded to question 20, which is about underlining key words and/or phrases, that they usually or always include this strategy in their instruction. The Chi-square calculation for this question is also

significant at a level of $p < .01$. From the results, it can be concluded that, the teachers might be more concentrated on the key words/phrases than the unknown words while having students read a text. Therefore, they do not tend to pull students' attention to unknown words; they focus on the general meaning of a reading text instead.

As was indicated in table 4, only one of the teachers wrote 'note-taking' as a particular reading strategy in their reading instruction. For question 21, the results support the idea that teachers do not frequently include this strategy in their teaching practices. As seen in table 9, 36.4% of the teachers reported that they 'sometimes' ask their students to take notes and 27.3% of them said that they 'rarely' have their students use this strategy while reading.

In the results for question 22, which are about reading carefully and slowly, 36.4% of the teachers indicate that they 'usually' include this practice in their reading instruction. The calculation is significant at the level of $p < .05$ for this question. However, when it comes to the results for question 23, the majority of the teachers (36.4%) report that they 'never' stress the importance of reading every single word. During the interview, P5 voiced her thoughts in these words:

I stress the importance of *reading* every word but I do not tell them to try to *understand* every single word but read carefully. When you are stuck, read the whole paragraph and try to understand the whole meaning, main idea. To do this you should read it carefully and slowly but do not try to understand every single word you read.

The words uttered by P5 and the findings on questions 22 and 23 of the questionnaire reveal that teachers differentiate reading a text carefully from reading every single word in a text. This also supports the findings that teachers generally

teach students to skip unknown words and instruct their students to concentrate on the general meaning of a text.

Although the Chi-square test for question 26 (I tell students to make guesses about up-coming information in the text) revealed significant results at a level of $p < .05$, the majority of the participants (51.5%) reported that they only ‘sometimes’ tell students to make guesses about up-coming information in the text. This indicates that this strategy is not a very frequently used one among the participants.

Questions 27 (I have students read aloud in class one at a time) and 28 (I teach students to read the first and the last paragraphs more carefully) are the strategies/activities used ‘rarely’ among the teachers. The Chi-square calculation for number 27 is significant at a level of $p < .05$, and number 28 was found to be significant at a level of $p < .01$. For both questions, 42.4% of the teachers indicated that they ‘rarely’ use those strategies in their reading instruction. During the interview, P4 commented on question 28, saying that “sometimes the most important things are found in the middle”.

The succeeding discussion is about the data gathered on teachers’ practices of post-reading strategies. Table 10 presents the results for questions 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 37, which are about post-reading strategies. Except for question 36, the findings for all the other questions were found to be significant on a Chi-square test. Numbers 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35 were found to be significant at a level of $p < .01$, and number 37 was found to be significant at a level of $p < .05$. According to these results, it can be assumed that post-reading strategies are at least ‘sometimes’ included in the reading instructions of the teachers. However, the percentages for

most of the items displayed in table 11 indicate that post-reading strategies are not as frequently used as the pre-reading and while-reading strategies.

Table 11

Items Related to Post-Reading Strategies

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
| Q.29 | 13 (39.4%) | 17 (51.5%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 9.46** |
| Q.30 | 1 (3.00%) | 13 (39.4%) | 12 (36.4%) | 6 (18.2%) | 0 (0.0%) | 11.75** |
| Q.31 | 2 (6.1%) | 14 (42.4%) | 16 (48.5%) | 1 (3.00%) | 0 (0.0%) | 22.39** |
| Q.32 | 4 (12.1%) | 13 (39.4%) | 14 (42.4%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 13.67** |
| Q.33 | 2 (6.1%) | 3 (9.1%) | 16 (48.5%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 17.06** |
| Q.34 | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (3.00%) | 16 (48.5%) | 12 (36.4%) | 3 (9.1%) | 19.25** |
| Q.35 | 9 (27.3%) | 16 (48.5%) | 7 (21.2%) | 1 (3.00%) | 0 (0.0%) | 13.91** |
| Q.36 | 5 (15.2%) | 11 (33.3%) | 12 (36.4%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 7.58 |
| Q.37 | 2 (6.1%) | 6 (18.2%) | 14 (42.4%) | 7 (21.2%) | 4 (12.1%) | 12.61* |

Note. Q.29: I ask comprehension questions about the text.
 Q.30: I ask students to draw conclusions about the text they have read.
 Q.31: I ask students to discuss the text after reading.
 Q.32: I ask students to comment on the text.
 Q.33: I ask students to summarize the text (written or oral).
 Q.34: I give students a quiz about the text.
 Q.35: I give students follow-up activities related to the text.
 Q.36: I assign students tasks to do using the information in the text.
 Q.37: I ask students to interpret the text.
 χ^2 = Chi-square
 * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

According to the responses to questions 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, and 37, teachers report that they ‘sometimes’ use the strategies indicated in those questions. For question 29, however, a strong majority (80.9%) of the teachers stated that they ‘always’ or ‘usually’ ask students comprehension questions about the text. Similarly, drawing conclusions and commenting on the text are among the most commonly used post-reading strategies by teachers in their reading instruction. For question 35,

virtually all teachers (97%) reported that they at least ‘sometimes’ assign students follow-up activities. During the interviews, P3, P4, P5, and P6 emphasized giving students follow-up activities such as writing an essay on the related topic. They indicated that such activities are essential in terms of getting output from the students after getting them to read the text and doing the comprehension questions.

Questionnaire Part IV

This part of the questionnaire referred to research question 2 b which was, “how do teachers make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies?” Since it was not possible to yield detailed information through the questionnaire, the purpose of this part was to gain some data as a starting point for the interviews, so that more precise questions on how teachers make use of the materials to teach reading strategies could be asked to the participants during the interviews.

Table 12 presents the results for the questions asked in part IV of the questionnaire. All the questions shown in the table below aimed at investigating whether the teachers make use of the course materials in order to teach reading strategies, to some extent how they do so, and whether they add any additional materials or aids.

The Chi-square calculation for all the items was found to be significant. The distribution of responses to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 were significant at a level of $p < .01$ and that of question 8 was significant at a level of $p < .05$. At the most general level, it can be said that teachers do make use of the course materials in different aspects to teach reading strategies.

Table 12

Questions Presented in Questionnaire Part IV

| Questions | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | χ^2 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------|
| Q.1 | 8 (24.2%) | 22 (66.7%) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 17.64** |
| Q.2 | 1 (3.0%) | 8 (24.2%) | 20 (60.6%) | 3 (9.1%) | 1 (3.0%) | 38.97** |
| Q.3 | 1 (3.0%) | 9 (27.3%) | 21 (63.6%) | 2 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 30.88** |
| Q.4 | 3 (9.1%) | 6 (18.2%) | 15 (45.5%) | 7 (21.2%) | 2 (6.1%) | 15.94** |
| Q.5 | 1 (3.0%) | 3 (9.1%) | 15 (45.5%) | 8 (24.2%) | 4 (12.1%) | 19.81** |
| Q.6 | 13 (39.4%) | 14 (42.4%) | 5 (15.2%) | 1 (3.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 14.40** |
| Q.7 | 1 (3.0%) | 3 (9.1%) | 15 (45.5%) | 11 (33.3%) | 3 (9.1%) | 22.30** |
| Q.8 | 4 (12.1%) | 15 (45.5%) | 13 (39.4%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 6.43* |

Note. Q.1: I use the pictures in the Headway/pack.

Q.2: I use the instructions step by step provided in the Headway/pack.

Q.3: I prefer using the 'suggested approach' materials in the pack.

Q.4: I try to simplify the materials in terms of language.

Q.5: I make changes in the materials in terms of content.

Q.6: When the text is culturally unfamiliar to students, I try to relate it to their culture.

Q.7: When the text is culturally unfamiliar to students I skip it and use other materials.

Q.8: In addition to the reading text provided, I use extra aids.

χ^2 = Chi-square

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

For question 1, all the participants stated that they use the pictures in both the Headway course book and the intermediate pack. When the interviewees were later asked when and why they use those pictures provided in the pack, they said that they usually use the pictures as warm-up activities to familiarize students with the context of the reading. As all the teachers indicated in question 8, during the interview, the interviewees also reported that they use sometimes additional aids. According to the interviews, by additional aids they meant their own pictures and some other visual aids such as realia.

In terms of questions 2, 3, 4, and 5, suggesting either deviation from or modification of the material, the responses follow a consistent pattern in that the majority of the participants report not always following the instructions step by step in the Headway course book / intermediate pack and sometimes trying to simplify the materials in terms of language or making changes in terms of content. When this issue was explored deeper during the interview, P6 made the following explanation for why she does not change the content: “it is maybe because I do not know how to change it. Sometimes I do not like the content but I do not know how to change it, how to adjust it. That is why I do not touch it.” P3 mentioned simplifying the materials in terms of language as follows:

I make some changes according to linguistic level of the students... or the level of understanding, because when you ask one or two comprehension questions and you see that they cannot answer those questions, you need to make changes in the questions... and maybe in the material... text. Make it shorter, make it simpler, such things.

Questions 6 and 7 were about cultural issues in the reading texts. For question 6, almost all the teachers reported that they try to relate culturally different texts to the culture of the students. This was elaborated on in the interviews when, for example, P3 stated her reason why she relates culturally different texts to students' own culture as such:

... while you are discussing something sometimes you need to see the Turkish equivalence, because it makes the comprehension easier if you know who to visualize, who to think of while you are doing something, if you have enough background information about the topic it help you to understand the text.

P2 and P4 mentioned that they are required to do the materials in class. Therefore, they make necessary adaptation or they have to relate the cultural issues that are unfamiliar to students in the materials. P2 said the following: “...we cannot

skip them [the materials] because of vocabulary and I try to relate it with our tradition. For example...they do not see the point in the British food so I try to relate it with our culture”. P4 said that “we are obliged to do them in class, though it is difficult and tiring to do them we have to do them.”

Despite the argument made by the participants in the above paragraph that they try to relate culturally unfamiliar texts to the culture of the target students, the result for the question 7, which is about skipping culturally unfamiliar texts and using others, seems to contradict to some extent with the answers given in question 6 in the questionnaire part IV. According to the results for the mentioned question, 45.5% of the participants in fact reported that they do ‘sometimes’ skip culturally unfamiliar texts.

Overall, when the results for questions 6 and 7 are compared, the conclusion can be drawn that although teachers say that they relate culturally unfamiliar texts to the culture of the students, they at least ‘sometimes’ skip culturally based reading materials and prefer to do other materials that students are familiar with culturally.

Questionnaire Part V

The purpose of this part of the questionnaire was to elicit data on teachers’ perceptions of the reading strategies presented in the course book. In this part, teachers were presented four items and were asked to rate their opinions from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The aim of this part was again to gather some general data in order to prepare in-depth questions for the interview.

Table 13 below presents the results for the questions asked in part V of the questionnaire. The Chi-square calculation for all the items was found to be significant at a level of $p < .01$. Nevertheless, according to the results presented in

table 13, teachers do not appear to have strong feelings about the reading materials in terms of reading strategy training.

Table 13

Questions Presented in Questionnaire Part V

| Questions | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree | χ^2 |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|----------|
| Q.1 | 2 (6.1%) | 19 (57.6 %) | 9 (27.3 %) | 2 (6.1 %) | 0 (0.0%) | 24.25** |
| Q.2 | 1 (3.0%) | 12 (36.4 %) | 16 (48.5 %) | 3 (9.1%) | 0 (0.0%) | 19.25** |
| Q.3 | 2 (6.1 %) | 18 (54.5 %) | 9 (27.3 %) | 3 (9.1 %) | 0 (0.0%) | 20.25** |
| Q.4 | 1 (3.0 %) | 9 (27.3 %) | 17 (51.5 %) | 5 (15.2 %) | 0 (0.0%) | 17.50** |

Note: Q.1: The way reading materials are designed is appropriate for teaching reading strategies.

Q.2: Reading strategies are included in the materials on an ongoing and systematic basis.

Q.3: Each text is designed for specific reading strategies.

Q.4: The amount of materials on reading strategies presented in the pack is sufficient for teaching reading strategies.

χ^2 = Chi-square

** $p < .01$

As seen in the table above, for all four questions, the majority of responses were either 'neutral' or 'agree'. For questions 1 and 3, the majority of the participants reported their agreement about the appropriateness in design of the reading materials for teaching reading strategies and the design of each text for specific reading strategies. For questions 2 and 4, the majority of the teachers were neutral. They did not state any strong opinions about whether the reading strategies that are included in the materials are done so on an ongoing and systematic basis or whether the amount of materials on reading strategies presented in the pack is sufficient for teaching reading strategies. If any conclusion might be drawn from the results gained from part V of the questionnaire, it can be said that the significantly chosen 'neutral' choices may possibly reveal the teachers' lack of confidence in their own degree of understanding about reading strategies. In other words, when the participants were

asked to report their degree of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies, the majority of the teachers (72.7%) reported that they were only ‘somewhat’ familiar with the concept. In this case, therefore, it might be natural to receive ‘neutral’ results in this section, which asks them to pass judgments on the presentation of reading strategies in the classroom materials.

Analysis of Interviews

For this study, interviews were also used as a research tool. The purpose for using interviews was to gather more in-depth and detailed information and to explore how teachers decide which reading strategies to teach and how they make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies.

Six of the 33 participants were asked to participate in the interview phase of the study. The participants were selected according to the answers they had given in the questionnaire. Basically, three pairs of participants were chosen according to their stated degrees of familiarity with the concept of reading strategies. P1 and P2 are the participants who stated that they were ‘slightly’ familiar with the concept of reading strategies, P3 and P4 were ‘somewhat’ familiar with the concept of reading strategies, and P5 and P6 were ‘very’ familiar with the concept of reading strategies.

During the interviews, sample-reading texts were used in order to guide the conversation about the teachers’ teaching practices. In order to get the teachers’ ideas about the reading texts and strategies, materials from both the Headway course book and the intermediate pack were selected. The Curricular Team designs all the materials for the intermediate pack, including the reading materials, and puts some additional tasks in the pack to complement and supplement the reading texts in the Headway course book. During the material selection process, the length of the texts

was considered. Some texts were culturally based in the sense that they focused on issues from cultures other than the students' own, and those texts were also included in the list to learn how teachers deal with such materials. Since two teachers share one class, it was assumed that the interviewees might have not used all the chosen texts in class and therefore, they were given a selection.

Of the selection offered, the following texts were the ones chosen to be discussed by the interviewees:

From the Headway course book:

- The writer, the painter, and the musician' (jigsaw) p. 30. (A replacement task is in the intermediate pack with a 'suggested approach', pp. 40-41, Teacher's (T's) Pack).
- 'A world guide to good manners' – how to behave properly in different parts of the world. p.40. (A replacement task is in the intermediate pack with a 'suggested approach', pp. 59-63, T's Pack).
- 'The modern servant' – the nanny, the cook, and the gardener (jigsaw) p.70. (A replacement task is in the intermediate pack with a 'suggested approach', pp. 142-149, T's Pack).
- '*Death Cigarettes?* You must be joking' – an interview with a man who markets a cigarette called *Death* p.100. (A replacement task is in the intermediate pack with a 'suggested approach', pp. 261-263, T's Pack).

From the pack:

- 'A Famous Person' Teachers' pack. p. 107.

Before talking about the texts the interviewees chose, all were asked about the reading strategies they use in their own reading process and whether they teach those particular strategies in their reading instructions. The answers to these questions were quite diverse. Among six interviewees, three participants (P3, P4, and P5) stated clear awareness of the use of reading strategies in their daily lives and the use of the appropriate reading strategies in their classroom instruction when necessary. One of the participants (P1) said that she was not sure about her reading strategies in her daily life and the remaining two interviewees (P2 and P6) said that they were not aware of using reading strategies in their daily lives.

However, P5 clearly stated her awareness of reading strategies in her daily life as such: "I use some strategies. I do not read everything. I read what I need. I check the topic and if I am interested in that I start reading... It saves time." Similarly, P3 said, "...sometimes I underline, sometimes there are some parts that I do not understand totally but I do not spend much time on it. I do not look up every word in a dictionary. I try to understand general meaning." When she was asked whether she teaches or uses those strategies in her classroom instruction, she said, "When it is appropriate, I use more than one".

P4 stated that he uses certain reading strategies like skimming. He said, "I do not like scanning and reading long texts. While reading newspaper articles, first I check the headlines and find the ones, which attract me. Most of the time, I do not like spending much time on reading". However, when he was asked if he teaches the strategies he uses in his daily life, he said:

No, if I do that I will be making a mistake. I just use the techniques, which the material requires. Most of the time I am stick to the instructions. Of course I have strategies myself, and as a teacher, but I

do not try to impose my students to read as the way I do, it depend on the passage, subject, discussion.

P2 said that she is not sure but she referred to guessing meaning from the context and prediction strategies. “I try to guess the meaning of a word by looking at the context and by looking at the topic... general background of what you are reading also, you need to have an idea of what you are reading...” When she was asked about classroom teaching of the strategies she listed she said, “ In classroom, we always try to force students into guessing meaning from context... first, we try to relate them with the context... try to think in that situation and then, we try to make them guess the meanings...”

The other interviewees, P1 and P6, said that they were not aware of their personal use of reading strategies. P1 tried to exemplify the classroom situation, however, as such: “... realia, objects, and pictures help students understand and have an idea about the text”. Additionally, P6 said, “I cannot say that I am aware of reading strategies in my daily life. I am not sure if I know all of them in my teaching”.

With four interviewees, two texts were used during the interviews. Although the other two interviewees also chose two texts, in each case only one was ultimately used because the interview took a long time and the participants said that they were tired. Before talking about the texts, interviewees were given some time to look at the texts to refresh their minds and consider what they would do and how they would handle the texts if they were to teach the reading text in class. Throughout the interview, the researcher avoided using the term ‘reading strategy’ but tried to elicit evidence of teaching them by asking about the activities. For example, the researcher asked the interviewees what they would do before having students read the text, how

they would facilitate students' comprehension of the text while reading or whether they would do anything else after doing the comprehension questions. It should be noted, however, that terms such as 'pre-reading', 'while-reading', and 'post-reading' activities do occur in the intermediate pack. As a follow-up to each question, the researcher asked the teachers why and how questions in order to gather still further information. The researcher arranged the questions in such a way that the pre-, while-, and post- reading strategies actually used by the teachers were grouped together along with their responses to 'how and why' they teach those particular reading strategies.

Pre-Reading Strategies

During the interview, the participants were asked what they would do before having their students read the texts. They were also asked whether and how they would use aids, such as pictures and titles, and asked to elaborate on their reasons for doing so.

Table 14

Pre-Reading Strategies Participants Mentioned During the Interviews

| <u>PRE – READING STRATEGIES</u> | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| *P1 | Follows the steps presented in the Headway course book and the pack, asking questions about the characters in the text, and giving some tasks. |
| *P2 | Relates students' knowledge with the context and pre-teaching key words. |
| *P3 | Providing students with context, activating students' prior knowledge or providing students with necessary background knowledge, predicting about the context, and pre teaching the vocabulary. |
| *P4 | Discussion of the topic, pre-teaching vocabulary, and relating knowledge of students to the information in the text. |
| *P5 | Personalization activities and relating knowledge of students to the information in the text. |
| *P6 | Predicting about the context by making use of the titles and the pictures and familiarizing students with the text (schema activation). |

Note. *P= participant

Almost all the participants (five out of six) reported that they try to relate students' background knowledge to the information in the text (activating schemata) prior to actual reading. In order to activate students' schemata or provide students with enough background knowledge, participants make use of title and pictures in the reading materials.

Referring to the text, called 'Death Cigarettes', two participants said similar things about pre reading strategies. P3 mentioned about contextualizing the text, saying, "I would use his pictures... I like visuals because they provide students with a kind of context. You need to contextualize the topic otherwise they might lose the interest". Then, referring to the particular pre-reading activities provided in the headway course book for the chosen text, she added:

The pre-reading activities presented in the book are suitable to me because it is a pair work [activity] and students think about the riskiest things and put them in order according to their ideas and give reasons. It is related to the topic and that is why it is good. It motivates students to relate their ideas to other reasons.

Similarly, P4 mentioned about the importance of discussion as a pre-reading strategy:

This text provides discussion for our students because most of them smoke. I ask them easy questions to involve them into a discussion. I would use the questions given in the book and I would ask question in my mind. I try to give a moral at the end of the discussion that smoking is a dangerous habit.

P4 stated her reasons for doing pre-reading activities, including appropriate pre-reading strategies as follows: "Students are not interested in reading a passage... you cannot do that [starting the reading activity without doing any pre-reading activities]... it is necessary to do such activities. The majority of the students should be interested in the lesson so I must do this."

A more theoretically based explanation, which can be counted as a general comment about how most of these teachers see pre-reading activities in a way of simulating interest in the topic, was made by P6 about the importance of pre-reading strategies when she noted, "... these kind of activities activate their own schemata... their knowledge about the topic. So, it will be easier for them to understand the text better". P3 also made a comment about stimulating background knowledge, and in doing so, raised an interesting problem for the text in the intermediate pack about Mahatma Gandhi, entitled 'A Famous Person'. P3 said that the schema activation activity given as task 1, as a pre-reading strategy did not work well. In her words, "...you will activate student's prior knowledge. The person here should have been chosen according to the students' prior knowledge not the teachers' prior knowledge because in my class, there were not many students who recognize him". She explained further when she was asked how she ultimately dealt with the activity:

It was impossible because the students did know nothing... Some just heard the name... rest had no idea when I asked them if they recognized him. When I could not activate their prior knowledge because they did not have any, I tried to have them guessed some information from the picture, and I asked... what else could you say about this poor man? How old was he? Is he living or dead? occupation? Where does he live? And it worked. They tried to predict some information about him... almost correct ones...

As research claims (Carrell, 1988; Dubin & Bycina, 1991), it is necessary to provide students with enough background knowledge if students do not have any so that students could interpret the text easier. According to what P3 reported, when she could not activate students' schema through the use of pictures, she tried to ask simple questions to involve students in the texts and have them predict about the

character mentioned in the text. Such pre-reading strategies, as Carrell (1985) argues, are crucial because they help students grasp the text.

For the same text, P5 also said that she used the pictures, in the following manner: “I ask them if they know this person to pull their attention and activate their prior knowledge... some simple questions like when he was born, where he was born... if they know”. P5 also said that it is important to motivate students and give them a purpose for reading and she explained why she values pre-reading activities further: “They should do some pre-reading activities. First, the motivation is important. We have an integrated program and we should involve other skills. Discussion is important and you should give a purpose for reading.” she describes her techniques for teaching pre-reading strategies as: “...Using some aids... students do not read something they are not familiar with and they are not interested in so first you should find the relation to get their attention.”

While Reading Strategies

During the interviews it was observed that teachers relied largely on the tasks that were provided in the intermediate pack. In response to a question about what they would do to facilitate students' comprehension of the text, they referred to the 'while-reading' tasks in the intermediate pack or the comprehension questions in the Headway course book, and explained how they utilize some reading strategies while students read the text.

Table 15

While-Reading Strategies Participants Mentioned During the Interviews

| WHILE READING STRATEGIES | |
|--------------------------|---|
| *P1 | Guessing the meaning of unknown words. |
| *P2 | Guessing the meaning of unknown words and skimming1. |
| *P3 | Looking over the task before reading the text, connection of what has been predicted in the previous stage and what has been read, reading for main idea, and guessing meaning of the unknown words from the context. |
| *P4 | Guessing meaning from the context, reading for gist, and the tasks in the course book. |
| *P5 | Guessing meaning from the context, reading for gist, skipping unknown words, and note-taking. |
| *P6 | Guessing meaning from the context, skipping unknown words, skimming, and scanning. |

Note. *P= Participant

As seen in the table above, all the participants mentioned the strategy of guessing meaning from the context strategy. The second most common strategy that teachers reported they teach was reading for general idea (skimming).

When the participants were asked how they teach the strategy of guessing the meaning of an unknown word from the context, the answers of P2, who is 'slightly' familiar with the concept of reading strategies, and P5, who is 'very' familiar with the concept of reading strategies, were quite different from each other. The difference reflects the depth of their understanding and knowledge of reading strategies and the reasons for teaching them. P2 described how she teaches the mentioned strategy to her students this way:

... I think maybe something common sense. It is like the word un-; usually this means that the word is negative, so simple things like this. We try to like pinpoint to them so they wake up and see 'aah, this must be a negative word' and then, like, we try to show them clues.

However, P5 gave a specific example on how she teaches guessing meaning from the context by making a link with reading for gist as follows:

First read the paragraph and try to understand what the paragraph is about and I am interested in specific word I ask them to read the paragraph and try to guess if that word is verb, noun, or adjective to find out the part of speech and according to the text if that word gives positive or negative meaning...

For guessing the meaning of unknown words, the teachers reported using the text and asking students to read the whole paragraph, or trying to exemplify and contextualize the words. P4 said the following: "I do not like giving the Turkish meaning of the word. I try to encourage them to guess... Or I can exemplify the word". By 'exemplify' he seemed to mean using the word in an example sentence or using it in context.

Apart from guessing meaning from the context and reading for gist strategies, two participants mentioned note-taking strategies they teach. When the participants were asked how they use note-taking strategies, the examples of note taking, given by P1 and P5 were quite different from each other. For example, P1 referred to a task in the example reading text and told how she changed the task after reading the text, saying she would have students "...exchange their questions and while group A is giving the answers, group B can take notes the answers for this task." On the other hand, P5 mentioned about the same note-taking strategy, but as something she would have the students do while reading a text, not while they were doing a follow-up task.

I tell them to read the paragraph, find out some key words and re-write it in their own words for example as this is a big paragraph so what is important here? When you read it again for the second time you know what it is about by looking at the key words.

Post-Reading Strategies

As might have been expected from the questionnaire results, the teachers in general were slightly less concentrated on post-reading strategies than they were on pre- and while reading strategies.

Table 16

Post-Reading Strategies Participants Mentioned During the Interviews

| POST READING STRATEGIES | |
|-------------------------|---|
| *P1 | Productive skills. |
| *P2 | -- |
| *P3 | Productive activities such as writing. |
| *P4 | Discussions from personal to general. |
| *P5 | Drawing conclusions, summarizing activities, and discussions. |
| *P6 | Summarizing the text, drawing conclusions, and writing |

Note. *P= participant

As seen in table 16, almost all the participants report using the same post-reading activities, and there are limited to discussing the reading topic or writing an essay related to the topic. Summarizing and drawing conclusion activities are the secondary activities mentioned by P5 and P6 during their interviews.

In similar ways, P3, P4, and P5 all mentioned about discussions after reading the text 'Death Cigarettes'. P3 said, for example:

I prefer enlarging the topic and asking them to share their experiences as a class. We try to generate a discussion. I would use the quotation and I would have students to explain their reasons for smoking, and maybe we may have a small discussion.

P4 mentioned about the grammar activities that are usually included after the reading texts as post-reading activities in the intermediate pack and complained that such activities do not help students to produce anything related to the reading topic.

Therefore, he prefers discussions too:

The post-reading task given for this text is a grammar activity. Actually, this is not very much related to the aim of this passage. In

the post activity we may move from personal to general discussion and we can ask them to write a report, how it affects people in general in their country.

P5 lists the reasons for using post-reading activities in his class as follows:

“...as a follow up activity... if I think that there is no need to discuss about the topic I can get them to write but you must find a good topic to get them to write.”

Continuing his discussion about the text, ‘Death Cigarettes’, P5 also mentioned further discussion-based post-reading activities he recalled using with the text:

We had a discussion based on some questions. We talked about a topic. The topic was ‘smoking should be made illegal’ and it was a classroom debate. There were two groups. One group was against and the other one was for. We did not have enough time so I asked them to go home and think about why they are for or against and next class we will discuss it... and most of their ideas were related to the reading we did the other day. In this case the reading was useful for them.

Similar to P4, P5 also listed her reasons for using the post-reading activities as follows:

... reading, speaking, and listening receptive skills, they give some kind of input to students and if your aim is to talk on a topic, first you should give some input to the students, and this one was on cigarettes. It gives some ideas to the students and for that discussion they had to read something and get an idea and then express themselves, because without input you cannot expect any output.

It is important to note that P5 makes an important connection between using the reading text as a source for the development of further skills – be it writing or, in this case, speaking.

Unlike P3, P4, and P5, P1, P2, and P6 said that they usually end their reading instructions after doing the comprehension questions presented in the pack.

Moreover, P6 admitted giving up doing such activities even if they are presented in

the pack, saying that students are not interested in doing them. “I have tried some of them but I did not get enough output and maybe gave up. Sometimes as teachers, we are trying to find an easy way, to be honest.” P6 also gave the following reason for not doing the post-reading activities: “Usually the reading texts are very long and usually I do not have time for the post-reading. Maybe sometimes, students are not familiar with those strategies.”

Referring to the reading text called ‘Death Cigarettes’, P2 said the following about the use of post-reading activities:

Usually I do not do any thing else because students get bored with it. At first they are happy because they have got something that they have knowledge on but once they start to read it, they do not see the point in it so I do not do anything but I do discussion on it... ‘Ok would you smoke death cigarette’ etc.

In order to find the answer to the second item of the second research question, which was “According to teachers’ self-reports, b) How do they decide which strategies to teach?” interviews were used. During the flow of the interviews, as teachers reported the reading strategies they teach or utilize in their teaching practices, they were asked the rationale behind these choices. The general outcome showed that teachers decide to teach the following strategies for the following purposes:

- Prediction strategies: Before having students read the text. In order to gain a general understanding of the text;
- Skipping: When students are overwhelmed about the range of unknown words and when those words are not barriers to their understanding of the text;

- Guessing meaning from the context: When students are stuck on the vocabulary and in order to prevent them to be dependent on the use of dictionaries
- Scanning: When the tasks/comprehension questions require this strategy;
- Skimming: Before doing the comprehension questions, in order to have students get the general message in the text;
- Note-taking: When the text is long;
- Reference strategies: When texts include such tasks in the practice sections.

In general, for the strategies taught, it can be claimed that the teachers do have a rationale, even if it may not correlate to an obvious understanding of reading theory.

Cultural Issues and Adaptation of Materials

Throughout the interviews, P2, P3, and P4 spoke about the adaptation of reading materials that are culturally unfamiliar to the students. They all agreed that relating cultural issues to things in the students' own culture is important because it helps students to understand the context better. As was discussed in part IV of the questionnaire, questions 6 and 7 were about relating culturally unfamiliar texts with the culture of students, and the majority of the participants reported relating such materials and using them instead of skipping them. The interviewees' statements seem to support the results gained in the questions mentioned above. The participants emphasized that they sometimes need to adapt some of the materials because they are very unfamiliar to the students' cultural background. P5 voiced his ideas about the

culturally unfamiliar reading texts both in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack as follows: “The cultural background of the students is a bit far from the reading passages provided in the textbooks so most of them are culturally inappropriate for the students...” When he was asked what he would do in such cases, he further explained: “...we are obliged to do them in class. Though it is difficult and tiring to do them, we have to do them.”

Teacher Training on Reading Strategies

During the interviews, two of the participants mentioned about the training issue for teachers. Even at the beginning of the interview, P3 mentioned that teaching reading strategies is very important. She continued her words as follows:

I believe that most of the teachers and the students lack creative thinking, we have never been taught how to do planning, how to negotiate with others... these are really important skills and we have to train students but first of all, we have to train our teachers and pay more attention teaching those skills because they are crucial.

She further stated that: “we are not fully aware of reading strategies as language teachers and of course our students are affected.” P3 was trying to say that since teachers were not taught certain reading strategies they are not very successful in teaching those strategies in their reading instructions. Therefore, she points out that before training students, training for teachers is essential.

Similar to P3, P6, who is very familiar with the concept of reading strategies, mentioned the teacher training issue from another perspective. She complained that teachers always utilize the same strategies such as skimming and scanning because the way the materials were designed forced them to do so. Then she spoke of the necessary changes in their teaching reading strategies with the help of training as follows:

We should change our perspectives. I have been teaching for eight years and I see that there are many things to learn about reading. We should have some workshops about different strategies, skills. So just we are doing skimming, scanning, comprehension questions. These are the main things we do in class and it is sometimes very boring for us as well.

Although the teacher training on reading strategies was mentioned only by two interviewees, it is a crucial point in the sense that the strategies might be taught in reading instruction more effectively through the help of training. Moreover, the teachers who are not very familiar with reading strategies might gain more awareness through training sessions.

Summary of Data Analysis

In the data analysis chapter, both the questionnaire and the interview data were analyzed. The questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively and the interviews were first categorized according to the three phases of reading instruction as pre-, while-, and post-, and then interpreted accordingly.

The general impression from the questionnaire is that most of the teachers have an idea what reading strategies are and why they need to give strategy training in their classrooms. The questionnaire and the interview results reveal that teachers value the pre-reading strategies they teach through making use of the pictures and titles, and that they tend to focus primarily on skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context strategies as while-reading strategies. However, with the exception of a few participants, it seems that the teachers are less likely to use post-reading strategies.

For the use of the materials on reading strategies, most teachers make use of the visuals and the tasks provided in the course books in order to either stimulate students' use of reading strategies or help train them on the use of reading strategies.

Although the participants did not report full satisfaction with the presentation of reading strategies in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack, especially the participants who assessed themselves as only 'slightly' familiar with the concept of reading strategies seem to agree that the intermediate pack serves as a good guide in how to utilize certain reading strategies in their reading instruction. On the other hand, the participants who were more familiar with the concept of reading strategies mentioned the over-emphasis on the pre-reading strategies, and the lack of emphasis on the post reading strategies. Moreover, some of the participants stated that the materials designed in the pack mostly present the same strategies such as skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context, and they said that this "does not add to students". They further stated that students should be presented more challenging reading strategies which would lead them to use their higher thinking abilities, such as synthesizing the information in the reading text.

Another point that the participants raised during the interviews was that of culturally unfamiliar texts and the problems they encountered attempting to use these texts. The participants reported that some materials are culturally bound and teachers have difficulty in familiarizing students with the text before getting them to read it and therefore, are forced to adapt the materials according to the students' needs.

Overall, it seems that the general outcomes of the interviews are consistent with the results gathered from the questionnaire. Considering the answers that interviewees gave to certain items in the questionnaire, it was revealed that their

responses during the interviews supported and provided greater insights into these previously given answers.

In the next chapter, the findings of this study, and implications for reading strategy instruction and their presentations in the materials design process, and reading strategy training for the teachers at EMU SFL will be discussed.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

This study investigated teachers' perceptions of reading strategies at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages (EMU SFL). For this study, a questionnaire and interviews were used as data collection devices. The participants of this study were the teachers working at EMU SFL, who taught at the intermediate level during the third module of the 2001-2002 academic year. The questionnaire was distributed to all 46 intermediate teachers in order to get a general picture of their reported reading strategy instruction practices, their understandings of reading strategies, and their perceptions about the distribution of reading strategies in the materials. The responses to the questionnaire were recorded and analyzed quantitatively.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted after the analysis of the questionnaires. For the interviews, six participants were selected according to their degree of familiarity towards the concept of reading strategies. The aim of the interviews was to gather more in-depth information about how teachers make use of materials to teach reading strategies as well as exploring their rationale behind their reading strategy instruction. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the researcher. The interviews were analyzed for the responses related to the research questions, which were subsequently categorized under the subheadings pre-, while-, and post-reading strategies. In addition to the above categories, cultural issues, adapting materials, and training for teachers on reading strategies were also dealt with as they strongly emerged from the interviews.

Discussion of Findings

In response to the first research question, which is “What are teachers’ understandings and perceptions of reading strategies and the purposes for teaching them?” the findings of this study showed that in general, teachers at EMU SFL are familiar with the concept of reading strategies. All the participants reported their familiarity in the questionnaires and they also reported teaching some certain reading strategies in their reading instruction. Their purposes for teaching certain reading strategies were elicited through interviews, in which teachers made the following points:

- to save time;
- to motivate students;
- to give students an aim to read the text;
- to help students relate their existing knowledge to the information in the text;
- to help students understand the text better while reading;
- to help students to do the tasks/comprehension questions easier;
- because the tasks require some specific reading strategies (reference questions, reading for gist questions, reading for specific information questions);
- to integrate other skills like speaking and writing in order to get output from the students.

Along with the questionnaire, the interviews also provided fruitful information about the teachers’ teaching practices of reading strategies in response to the first part of the second research question: According to teachers’ self-reports,

what reading strategies (if any) do they teach?” According to the results gained from the questionnaire, teachers reported teaching almost all the listed pre-reading strategies, such as predicting about the context by making use of the titles or pictures provided in the material, or relating the text to the knowledge that the students already possess. During the interviews, all the teachers mentioned using the same pre-reading strategies in their teaching practices. The interviews revealed that brainstorming strategies were the dominantly utilized pre-reading strategies by the teachers before they get students to read the text. Similar to what was stated in Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto’s (1989) study, the teachers said that they aim to activate students’ prior knowledge on the topic of reading to prepare them for actual reading. Supporting the results of the questionnaire teachers said, in the interviews that they make use of the topic of the reading text together with the pictures provided in the materials or with their own pictures, in order to activate students’ existing knowledge. By doing this, teachers reported that they aim to relate students’ background knowledge with the information in the text, motivate them to read the text, and thereby, to provide them with a purpose for doing the reading. It is also important to note that teachers reported trying to familiarize students with culturally unfamiliar texts at this stage. Possible reasons for the high usage of pre-reading strategies might be that such strategies are emphasized both in the Headway course book and the intermediate pack.

Additionally, based on various comments about why teachers use pre-reading strategies in the materials, it seems that teachers might feel that they need to do some warm-up activities using pre-reading strategies prior to actual reading.

As while-reading strategies, teachers reported that they emphasize the importance of reading for gist, reading without being dependent on every unknown word, and getting the general message in the written text. In order to train students away from an over-reliance on dictionaries, teachers also value teaching students to guess the meaning of unknown words from the context and, accordingly, they ask their students to use this strategy while they are reading the text. During the interviews, teachers reported that they teach scanning techniques, especially when students are doing comprehension questions. Some of the participants mentioned instructing their students in note-taking strategies while reading. They said that they ask their students to take notes as they read because it helps them to more easily remember the main points in a text.

The results of both the questionnaire and the interviews revealed that the teachers are either less familiar with or place less value on post-reading strategies than they do on the pre- and while-reading strategies in their reading instructions. Some of the participants, nevertheless, indicated the teaching of some post-reading strategies, such as summarizing a text, drawing conclusions from the readings and doing follow-up exercises like discussions or essay writing. During the interviews, some teachers emphasized that the curriculum follows an integrated syllabus and it is essential to do writing or speaking activities and to get students to produce something based on what has been read. As one teacher pointed out, the post-reading strategies allow students to produce output through discussions or writings after getting the input as a result of reading. On the other hand, some teachers honestly reported that they seldom use the provided post-reading strategies, as they find that students get bored and do not see the point of going further after the reading. Interestingly, it was

those teachers who reported a higher familiarity with the concept of reading strategies who were more likely to emphasize the benefits of the post-reading activities.

The second extension of the second research question was: According to teachers' self-reports, how do they decide which strategies to teach? In order to answer this research question teachers were directly asked during the interviews their reasons for teaching the reading strategies they mentioned. As was discussed in the data analysis chapter, teachers are able to list various reasons according to the nature of the text and needs of the students for teaching certain reading strategies, though their explanations may not be consciously related to a particular understanding of reading theories.

The third extension of the second research question was: According to teachers' self-reports, how do they make use of the course materials to teach reading strategies? The partial answer to this question was gained through the questionnaire. The aim of part IV of the questionnaire was to get preliminary data about how teachers make use of the materials to teach reading strategies. As was discussed in the data analysis chapter of this thesis, almost all the teachers reported making use of titles, pictures, and the people mentioned in the reading texts as warm-up devices before having students begin the actual reading. The same number of teachers also indicated that when the context contains unfamiliar cultural issues, they attempt to relate it to the students' own culture. The majority of the teachers indicated using the 'suggested approach' sections for almost all the reading texts about how to deal with the reading texts in class. Some of the teachers said that they simplify the materials in terms of language. When in-depth questions were asked during the interviews,

teachers said that they usually encourage students, when faced with difficult texts in terms of language, not to concentrate on words but on the general message in the text. During the interviews, teachers also reported that the tasks themselves play an important role in determining which reading strategies are taught. This is so, they reported, since some tasks require students to read for gist, and others require them to read for specific information.

Apart from the mentioned reading strategies, teachers brought up as well the issue of culturally unfamiliar texts and the difficulties they face when conducting reading classes using such reading materials. As Carrel and Eisterhold (1988) mentioned in their study, background knowledge is culture specific and if such culture specific values are dominant themes in a reading text and they are not familiar to the students' own culture, those culture specific issues can be a significant factor in comprehension of the text. Similar to what Carrell and Eisterhold (1988) claimed, the teachers in this study referred to the mismatch between the cultural themes provided in the materials and the particular cultural background knowledge of students. They pointed out that students do not understand what the text is about and subsequently; they have no interest in reading the text. Therefore, as teachers stated they have to adapt the materials in order to cater to students' interest. At the same time, however, they asserted they have difficulty in adapting culturally different texts for their students.

Adapting the reading texts in general was another point that emerged during the interview sessions, though it was for the most part closely related to the cultural issues mentioned above. Other reasons that led teachers to adapt the materials were the level of the texts or the tasks, the nature of the tasks, (e.g., ones in which

grammar points were over-emphasized); and the lack of post-reading activities provided in the materials.

During the interviews, two participants mentioned the issue of training on reading strategies for the teachers. One of the participants claimed that teachers and students lack creative thinking abilities and especially teachers should receive training in the use of different reading strategies. Similarly, another participant claimed that they always focus on the same strategies such as skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context but, as she said, intermediate level students need to receive training in, and exposure to different reading strategies, which may lead them to use their higher thinking skills, such as synthesizing the information in the text or discussing a quotation. However, she said that, in order to teach those strategies to the students, first of all, teachers should receive some training. At least workshops, she noted, could be established for such specific purposes.

Considering the points these two participants raised during the interviews, a teacher-training program similar to that done by Ely (1996) might be conducted. In his training program, teachers prepared lessons, presented them in class, and got immediate peer feedback. With such a training program, teachers at EMU SFL may gain more awareness about the importance and the variety of reading strategies in their classroom practices. Similar to Ely's findings, the reason why teachers in this study complained about the restricted number of reading strategies in their instruction might be because they have insufficient practice, lack of confidence, or are undecided about which strategy to utilize according to which purpose. Therefore, if teachers are given similar training even in workshop format, their understanding of reading strategies might be strengthened and therefore, contribute to their ability to

implement, adapt, and develop those strategies in their own instruction. Moreover, as Allan and Bruton (1998) stated, through such training sessions, teachers may learn from each other how to utilize different reading strategies. Additionally, they may gain awareness of their existing reading strategies that they use in their daily lives and how to use them in their classroom instructions.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on teachers' complaints about the restricted number of reading strategies presented in the materials, more varied reading strategies other than skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context, might be recommended to include in the intermediate pack.

Especially for the teachers who are not very familiar with the concept of reading strategies, more explicit instructions and guidelines on how to utilize different strategies could be included in the intermediate pack as attached to certain reading texts. Basic guidelines on why to use those strategies could also be added for teachers. If the teachers can pass on to their students an understanding of ways in which certain strategies may be useful, they might begin to address the problems of students not being interested in certain strategy-teaching activities.

Also, given teachers' complaints that the number of skimming, scanning, and guessing meaning from the context strategies in the intermediate pack exceed the number of while-reading and post-reading strategies, the overall number and type of strategies to be taught could be increased. As results from both from the questionnaires and the interviews showed, post-reading strategies are often neglected in reading instruction at EMU SFL. Some of the participants (e.g., P3 and P4) stated that the use of post-reading activities are beneficial, in that students are given an

opportunity to practice what has been learned through speaking or writing, or they practice language work that is relevant to what has been presented in the reading text. With respect to these listed benefits, more post-reading activities might be included in all the materials. Additionally, teachers might be reminded about the importance of post-reading strategies. Necessary guidelines and instructions for the teachers might be attached to the activities, explaining both why and how they might utilize appropriate post-reading strategies in their teaching practices. In order to further emphasize the benefits of post-reading activities, teachers might be reminded during the weekly held Teaching Team Meeting about different uses of post-reading activities and given tips on how they might utilize different post-reading strategies for specific reading materials. Moreover, teachers might be invited to exchange ideas on the issue during those meetings. It has been suggested that posing the following questions might be useful in order to get ideas for post-reading work when reading texts are considered:

1. Do the learners know of a similar situation to that presented in the text?
2. Does the text present a situation that calls for recommendations?
3. Does the text present a situation that invites completion?
4. Does the texts present views that might need to be counter-balanced? (Sarıçoban, 2001, p. 3).

In order to raise students' interests and involve them in the texts easily, a needs analysis process could be conducted. In this way, their affective needs could be determined and more contemporary texts could be included as reading selections. In such a case, it would be easier to activate students' schema and involve them in the reading process.

Through a needs analysis process, culturally bound texts could also be determined and perhaps discarded, and materials according to students' needs and interests could be selected. If this is done, teachers might not need to adapt the materials to cater for students' interests and could concentrate more on effective instruction.

Teacher training was another issue raised during the interviews. Various workshops might be conducted for teachers. Through workshops, teachers might be informed about different reading strategies and how to train students on those strategies. Moreover, teachers might gain more awareness and familiarity through such workshops.

Limitations of the Study

The research study investigated the perceptions towards reading strategies of 46 teachers who taught at the intermediate level during the third module of the 2001-2002 academic year at EMU-SFL. Since the research was done with a limited number of participants, the results of the study cannot be generalized to other intermediate level teachers outside of EMU SFL. It is, however, likely to reflect the general picture of the nearly 120 EFL teachers at EMU SFL, since they rotate teaching levels each module, and thus the particular 46 teachers were a more or less randomly selected sample of the overall population.

The study was also limited in that it relied only on teachers' reports, and was unable to include any classroom observation to support the findings.

Suggestions for Further Research

Because of the time and distance constraints, involving all the teachers working at EMU SFL in the research was not possible. Therefore, the study was

limited to the number of teachers who taught at the intermediate level. The same study could be replicated to include a greater number of instructors teaching at different levels. This would allow for a greater exploration of reading strategy instruction at various class levels. Moreover, the questionnaire survey could be conducted at other institutions, thereby yielding more generalizable results.

Another possibility for future research would be to add an observation element to the study to find out whether and how teachers really teach the reading strategies they report. Additionally, students could be included in a future study. Their perceptions of reading strategies might also be investigated in order to allow for a comparison of teachers' and students' ideas. Alternately, students could be traced after completing their studies at the School of Foreign Languages in order to explore whether they apply any of the taught reading strategies during their later content course studies.

Conclusion

The research investigated teachers' perceptions of reading strategies, exploring how they teach certain reading strategies and how they make use of the course materials to teach them. The study revealed that the teachers dominantly use pre-reading strategies. In terms of teaching while-reading strategies, teachers rely on the tasks. According to the results, post-reading strategies are the most neglected ones for certain reasons such as the lack of activities in the materials that might promote the use of post-reading strategies and the students' boredom.

Apart from the strategies mentioned above, cultural issues and related adaptation problems were raised by the teachers. The need for teacher training on the

use of different reading strategies was another issue that was raised by the participants during the interviews.

The results of the studies and the pedagogical implications made in this chapter might be used for better results in strategy training in reading instruction.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Colleagues,

I am currently enrolled in the MA TEFL Program at Bilkent University. I am conducting a study on **teachers' perceptions of strategy training in reading instruction** at Eastern Mediterranean University, School of Foreign Languages.

The purpose of the study is to find out how teachers perceive teaching reading strategies and how they make use of the course materials to teach them. These findings may contribute to the design of the intermediate pack and to the adaptation of the reading materials in the Headway course book, and therefore, may be of benefit to you as teachers, to the administration, and ultimately to the students.

This questionnaire is the first phase of the study. The second phase is the interviews, which will be held with teachers selected according to diversity of answers given. Therefore, in order to get in touch with those teachers, I will ask you to provide your name and surname in part I. The personal information provided will be kept strictly confidential and under no circumstances will be used or shared.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my thesis advisor.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

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PART I:**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Please circle the appropriate choices and provide the necessary information below.

1. Name:
2. Surname:.....
3. Gender: a. male b. female
4. Years of teaching experience:
 - a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-4
 - c. 5-8
 - d. 9-12
 - e. 13-16
 - f. 17 or more
4. Years of teaching experience at EMU SFL:
 - a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-4
 - c. 5-8
 - d. 9-12
 - e. 13-16
 - f. 17 or more
5. Degree Program(s) completed:
 - a. BA/BS in _____ at
(university)_____ in (year)_____.
 - b. MA/MBA in _____ at
(university)_____ in (year)_____.
 - c. PhD in _____ at
(university)_____ in (year)_____.

PART II:

Please answer the questions as frankly as possible.

1. How familiar are you with the concept of reading strategies? Please put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

- Very
- Somewhat
- Slightly
- Not at all

2. Please list any particular reading strategies you teach in class.

3. What are your reasons for teaching reading strategies in class? (Tick (✓) all that apply)

- It helps students understand texts better.
- To improve their enjoyment of the texts.
- Because they are included in the pack.
- To develop subskills for developing overall reading skills.
- For the appreciation of the text.
- To have students be aware of the language they are learning.
- To save time while reading.
- To prepare students for the tests.
- To prepare them for outside reading.
- To enhance autonomy.

Others

PART III:

While answering the questions in this part, please consider ***what you actually do*** while dealing with a reading text. Tick (✓) only ***one option*** for each item.

5 – always, 4 – usually, 3 – sometimes, 2 – rarely, 1 – never

| No | Items | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I set a purpose for reading. | | | | | |
| 2. | I ask students to read the titles and predict what the text is about. | | | | | |
| 3. | I ask students to look at illustrations/pictures and try to guess how they relate to the text. | | | | | |
| 4. | I set a context before students begin reading. | | | | | |
| 5. | I use instructional aids (e.g. realia, music, etc.) to set a context. | | | | | |
| 6. | I have the students quickly look over the text before reading. | | | | | |
| 7. | I ask students warm-up questions related to the text before reading. | | | | | |
| 8. | I teach vocabulary before students read the text. | | | | | |
| 9. | Before doing discussion or any other activity, I have students read the text. | | | | | |
| 10. | I ask students to relate the text/topic to their experience. | | | | | |
| 11. | I ask students to relate what they read to what they already know. | | | | | |
| 12. | I set a time limit for reading in class. | | | | | |
| 13. | I teach all the new vocabulary in the text. | | | | | |
| 14. | I ask students to use a monolingual dictionary. | | | | | |
| 15. | I allow students to use a bilingual dictionary. | | | | | |
| 16. | I teach students how to guess the meaning of unknown words. | | | | | |
| 17. | I ask students to guess/predict the meaning of unknown words. | | | | | |
| 18. | I tell the students to skip unknown words. | | | | | |
| 19. | I ask students to underline unknown words. | | | | | |
| 20. | I ask students to underline key words and/or phrases. | | | | | |
| 21. | I ask students to take notes while reading. | | | | | |
| 22. | I tell students to read carefully and slowly. | | | | | |
| 23. | I stress the importance of reading every word. | | | | | |

5 – always, 4 – usually, 3 – sometimes, 2 – rarely, 1 – never

| No | Items | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24. | I ask students to read the text more than once. | | | | | |
| 25. | I ask students to try to visualize what they read. | | | | | |
| 26. | I tell students to make guesses about up-coming information in the text. | | | | | |
| 27. | I have students read aloud in class one at a time. | | | | | |
| 28. | I teach students to read the first and the last paragraphs more carefully. | | | | | |
| 29. | I ask comprehension questions about the text. | | | | | |
| 30. | I ask students to draw conclusions about the text they have read. | | | | | |
| 31. | I ask students to discuss the text after reading. | | | | | |
| 32. | I ask students to comment on the text. | | | | | |
| 33. | I ask students to summarize the text (written or oral). | | | | | |
| 34. | I give students a quiz about the text. | | | | | |
| 35. | I give students follow-up activities related to the text | | | | | |
| 36. | I assign students tasks to do using the information in the text | | | | | |
| 37. | I ask students to interpret the text | | | | | |

PART IV:

Please answer the questions below considering the reading materials in the Headway intermediate textbook and the intermediate pack as course materials.

5 - always, 4 – usually, 3 – sometimes, 2 – rarely, 1 – never

| No. | Items | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I use the pictures in the Headway/pack | | | | | |
| 2. | I use the instructions step by step provided in the Headway/pack. | | | | | |
| 3. | I prefer using the ‘suggested approach’ materials in the pack. | | | | | |
| 4. | I try to simplify the materials in terms of language. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 5. | I make changes in the materials in terms of content. | | | | | |
| 6. | When the text is unfamiliar to students, I try to relate it to their culture. | | | | | |
| 7. | When the text is culturally unfamiliar to students I skip it and use other materials. | | | | | |
| 8. | In addition to the reading text provided, I use extra aids. | | | | | |

PART V:

Answer the questions below considering if the reading materials foster reading strategy training.

5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – neutral, 2 –disagree, 1 – strongly disagree

| No. | Items | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The way reading materials are designed is appropriate for teaching reading strategies. | | | | | |
| 2. | Reading strategies are included in the materials on an ongoing and systematic basis. | | | | | |
| 3. | Each text is designed for specific reading strategies. | | | | | |
| 4. | The amount of materials on reading strategies presented in the pack is sufficient for teaching reading strategies. | | | | | |

APPENDIX B

Teachers' Self Reported Reading Strategies in Questionnaire Part II

| Participants | Strategies |
|--------------|--|
| P 1 | -- |
| P 2 | Using aids/objects/pictures/titles/headlines (warm-up), having something to do (aim for reading), help (guide) what they look for, where/how they find the answer. |
| P 3 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 4 | Pre-discussion, pre-reading, silent reading (skimming, scanning), post-reading, post-discussion. |
| P 5 | Reading for gist, reading for specific information, reading for inference, reading for prediction, etc. |
| P 6 | Scanning, skimming, comprehension questions, true/false statements, matching the headings with the paragraphs, referential questions, guessing vocabulary |
| P 7 | Skimming, scanning, matching the topic with the correct paragraph. |
| P 8 | Pre-teach vocabulary, talk about the topic before reading the text, I ask comprehension questions so that they have an aim to read the text. |
| P 9 | Reading for general information, reading for specific information, skimming, scanning. |
| P 10 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 11 | --- |
| P 12 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 13 | Skimming/scanning, reading for gist, for comprehension. |
| P14 | Guessing meaning from the context, skimming, scanning, taking notes. |
| P 15 | Jigsaw, skimming, scanning. |
| P 16 | Pre-reading: discussion, prediction, guessing meaning of the words While reading: skimming, scanning. Post reading: writing, discussion |
| P 17 | Skimming, scanning, guessing meaning from the context, reading for gist. |
| P 18 | Guessing meaning from the context, text coherence, reference words, sentences, prediction, skimming, scanning. |
| P 19 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 20 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 21 | Reading for gist/specific information, skimming, scanning. |
| P 22 | Skimming, scanning. |
| P 23 | Pre-teaching vocabulary if the vocabulary in the text is higher than the students' level that they cannot guess from the context, discussions before and after reading the text, using realia and real life experiences then, relating it to the text. |
| P 24 | Scanning, skimming, gist. |
| P 25 | Skimming, scanning, gist. |
| P 26 | -- |

| | |
|------|---|
| P 27 | Skimming, scanning, reading for gist. |
| P 28 | Most of the items mentioned in the following pages. |
| P 29 | Predicting the content from the title or pictures set a context before getting students to read the text, guessing the meaning of unknown words. |
| P 30 | Reading for the gist, reading for specific information, reading for referential information, reading for guessing meaning from the context, skimming, scanning. |
| P 31 | Reading for gist, specific information, etc. |
| P 32 | Discussing the topic with students before they start reading. Students do this by looking at the pictures if there are or reading the headline of the article. |
| P 33 | --- |

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant;

You have been asked to participate in a survey. The aim of the study is to investigate the perceptions of teachers towards strategy training in reading instruction at Eastern Mediterranean University. In order to achieve the goal, first you answered a questionnaire, which investigated your degree of familiarity of reading strategies, your teaching practices of them, and your perceptions of the presentation of reading strategies. Second, you are going to be interviewed in order to have deeper insights of how you teach the reading strategies, how you make use of the materials to teach them, and the reasons behind your teaching those strategies.

Your participation in the study will bring invaluable contributions to future implementation of reading strategies into the course materials. Any information given to me will be kept confidential and your name will not be released. This study involves no risk to you.

I would like to thank you for your participation.

Ayşegül Sallı
MA TEFL Program
Bilkent University

I have read and understood the information given above. I hereby agree to my participation in the study.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

Hello, thank you for coming for the interview. As you remember I have been carrying out a research on teachers' perceptions of reading strategies.

First I will ask you some general questions. Then, we will continue the interview with specific reading texts that you used during the 3rd module with intermediate level students.

1. Briefly, are you usually aware of using any specific reading strategies in your daily life? For example, when you read newspapers, novels, or even ads.?

* If yes, What are they? What are your reasons?
2. Do you present any of those strategies in your reading instruction?
why/why not?
3. Here is one of the reading texts I chose would you take a minute or so to take a look at it. When you are ready, could you tell me how you would deal with it as a start of before you get students to read it?
4. Would you use the pictures here or skip them?

*If yes, how would you use them, why? *If no, why not?
5. What other points would you consider before you have students read the text?

(vocabulary, setting context, use of aids, activating schemata, etc.)
6. For example, the book presents some pre-reading activities, would you use them, how would you use them? What are the reasons?

7. The text is long (reading p. 30 Headway) how would you design the reading activity? Why?
8. What are the steps you take as you invite students for reading (purpose, etc.)?
9. Let's say, although you taught some vocabulary before having students read, what would you do if they ask the meaning of other words?
10. Do you suggest any ways to make comprehension easier for students?
If yes, what do you suggest?
 - a. For this particular text, what would you say? Why?
11. (X) text has some additional activities in the intermediate pack, would you use them? Why? / Why not?
12. What do you do after students read the text? What reading strategies do you think student should know in order to do the questions?
13. Would you do anything else with students about this text? Why? (Why not?)
14. In general, what do you think about the presentation of various reading strategies both in the Headway course book and intermediate pack?
 - a. Is the amount of strategies presented enough?
 - b. Do you think the reading strategies presented in the materials is beneficial?
 - c. Do you observe any improvement in students reading ability by the end of eight-week module?

- d. What would you suggest to better help students cope with the texts easier?

APPENDIX E

Sample Reading Materials Used for the Interviews

READING

Pre-reading task

1. Work in pairs. Which of the following do you think is the riskiest?

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| playing Russian roulette | hang-gliding |
| taking cocaine | smoking tobacco |
| riding a motorbike at 200 kph | |
| crossing the road with your eyes closed | |

2. Read the quotations about smoking. What view of smoking does each quotation express?
- a 'Out of a thousand smokers of 20 cigarettes a day, one will be murdered, six will be killed on the roads, and about three hundred and thirty will die prematurely because of their smoking.'
- b 'If you decide to give up smoking and drinking, you don't actually live longer; it just seems longer.'
- c 'Teenagers begin to smoke because they think it's cool and because they think they look grown-up. The cigarette is a symbol of defiance and an attack on authority.'
- d 'I have every sympathy with the American who was so horrified by what he had read about the effects of smoking that he gave up reading.'
- e 'The world spends \$150 billion a year on smoking-related illnesses.'
3. Have attitudes to smoking changed in your country over the past few years? How? Do as many people smoke?
4. You are going to read an interview with a man called B J Cunningham. Look at the pictures and read these facts about him.

- He's a chain smoker.
- He wears black leather cowboy clothes.
- He rides a Harley-Davidson motorbike.
- He has a weak chest.
- He returned to his true love after six months.
- He has started his own tobacco company.
- His company is not very successful.
- He smoked fifteen cigarettes during the interview.

- How old do you think he is?
- What do you know about his way of life?
- What kind of ...

Reading

Read the text.

- Were your ideas about B J Cunningham correct? Did you learn anything about him that surprised ...



**'Here!
Have one of mine!
'Death' cigarettes?
You must be joking!**

David Andrews meets B J Cunningham, a dedicated smoker who loyally puffs his own cigarettes called *Death*.



OK. So here are the facts. There's an Englishman called B J Cunningham who has been smoking since he was eleven. He's a chain smoker who's in love with smoking. He smokes between two and three packets a day, and already, at the age of 30, has a weak chest. He was in hospital for six days when his lungs collapsed. 'It was at that point that I did actually give up cigarettes for six months.' But when he returned to his true love, He wears black leather cowboy clothes and has a fondness for classic Harley-Davidson motorbikes, which he has been riding for the past fifteen years. 'I've had about ten of them,' he says coolly.

So far, not a very remarkable life. But then, B J Cunningham (no one actually knows what B J stands for) had an idea one night in a bar in LA. 'Let's market a cigarette called *Death*,' he said to a business partner. 'Why?' said the partner.

'It's obvious,' he explains to me. 'When you take a packet of cigarettes out of your top pocket and put it on the bar in front of you, you're making a statement about yourself, exactly as you do with the clothes you wear, the music you like, and the newspaper you read. You're saying, "These cigarettes are a part of me."'

If you take out a packet of Benson and Hedges, you're saying, "I'm classy — gold packet — part of the society." If you take out a packet of Marlboro, you're saying, "I'm an outdoor type. I like wearing a cowboy hat and riding horses."

Now, if you produce a packet of *Death* cigarettes,' he continues, producing a packet of *Death* cigarettes to illustrate his point, 'what you're saying is ...'

He looks at me to make sure that I'm going to understand what you're saying about yourself if you smoke *Death* cigarettes. But do I need to? We know what *Death* cigarettes are about. B J Cunningham has been telling us about them since he started his Enlightened Tobacco Company (ETC) in 1991.

Now one has now got the joke, thank you very much. We've seen the black packets with their skull and crossbones on the front and the white packets which are called *Death Lights*; and we've heard about the coffin-shaped vending machines in pubs.

Well, for anyone who has managed to avoid publicity, here goes. *Death* cigarettes are for a chain smoker who wants to say, 'Yes, I'm killing

myself, but at least I know it, and I smoke a brand which doesn't try to hide the fact.' *Death* cigarettes concludes B J, 'say, "Don't you dare tell me to stop!"'

B J Cunningham, now on his ninth cigarette of the interview, says he wants to expose the hypocrisy behind the tobacco industry. 'Governments can't afford to ban smoking because they receive huge amounts of money in tax. Tobacco companies try to improve their image by sponsoring sports events such as motor racing, rugby, football, cricket, and tennis, at vast expense. What everybody wants to forget is that smoking kills. That's why I'm here, to remind people that smoking and death are linked.'



The ETC hoped to win a good share of the UK market. Cigarettes in Britain are a £12 billion industry in which four companies control 95% of the market. The question is: How do we get a share? He knows the question but he can't afford the answer. The ETC can't afford to advertise like the big companies. It has been losing about £1 million a year.

Personally, I have a very different opinion as to why so few people choose to smoke a brand of cigarette called *Death*. B J Cunningham has misunderstood human psychology. Of course smokers know that their habit is probably going to kill them, but they prefer not to think about it. The only people who are going to smoke his cigarettes are people like himself. When I offered one to a friend recently, his reaction was, 'You must be joking.' And this is what *Death* cigarettes are all about. It's a joke that was funny, but isn't funny any more.

But B J is still obsessed by fags. 'Do you know the main reason I love my job?' he says. 'It's because it gives me a chance to attack the anti-smoking killjoys! Those puritans who try to control our lives. I've met many people who don't smoke, but who tell me that if smoking were made illegal, they would fight it. You just can't have laws which control every aspect of the way people live.'

I finally started to waffle to this character B J Cunningham. It was the end of the interview, and the number of fag ends in the ashtray had increased to fifteen. Perhaps he had something important to say after all. Not just, 'Hey everybody! Look at me! I'm weird, and I'm killing myself!'

Comprehension check

Read the text more carefully. Complete the sentences with the best ending, a, b, or c.

1 B J Cunningham smokes two or three packets of cigarettes a day ...

a even though he has a weak chest.

b because he has to for his job.

c to prove that smoking is safe.

2 He wears cowboy clothes and rides a Harley-Davidson motorbike because ...

a he plays in a rock 'n' roll band.

b he likes everything that comes from the States.

c it is part of the image he wants to create for himself.

3 B J Cunningham says that smokers choose a certain brand of cigarettes ...

a because it shows the kind of person they are.

b to go with the clothes they are wearing.

c because they want to be sporty or part of high society.

4 The interviewer gets the impression that the interviewer ...

a is fascinated and admires B J Cunningham.

b is bored and irritated by B J Cunningham.

c is very angry with B J Cunningham.

5 B J Cunningham says *Death* cigarettes are for people ...

a who want to be honest and aggressive.

b who want to prove that smoking cigarettes doesn't kill.

c who want to expose the hypocrisy of governments and the tobacco industry.

6 B J Cunningham says that his job ...

a is to get sponsorship for sports events.

b is to sell as many cigarettes as he can.

c is to be honest about the dangers of smoking.

7 The interviewer thinks that the ETC hasn't been successful because ...

a the big tobacco companies spend £12 billion on advertising.

b everybody thinks that *Death* cigarettes are just a joke.

c smokers don't want to be reminded that smoking kills.

8 B J Cunningham ...

a wants to defend people's right to smoke.

b wants to control the lives of smokers.

c thinks that smoking will one day be made illegal.

9 The interviewer warms to B J Cunningham at the end of the interview ...

a when B J Cunningham gives his main reason for selling *Death* cigarettes.

b because he realizes that he is just a weird eccentric.

c when he finally puts out his last cigarette.

Language work

Here are the answers to some questions. Write the questions.

1 _____ ?
Since he was eleven.

2 _____ ?
Between forty and sixty.

3 _____ ?
Yes, he has. He gave up for six months after his lungs collapsed.

4 _____ ?
For fifteen years.

5 _____ ?
About ten.

6 _____ ?
In 1991.

7 _____ ?
About £1 million a year.

8 _____ ?
Fifteen.

Discussion:

Discuss the following in small groups. Then report back to the whole class.

- 1 How much is a packet of cigarettes in your country? How much of that is tax? What sort of health warnings are there? Do tobacco companies sponsor any sports events?
- 2 Why is it that drugs such as nicotine and alcohol are legal in many countries, while other drugs are illegal?
- 3 Do you think smoking should be banned in all public places? Or, should smokers be allowed to smoke when and where they want?





'HERE! HAVE ONE OF MINE!'

'Death cigarettes?'

'You must be joking!'

WHILE READING

VOCABULARY:

Look at the dictionary definitions of the words below. The words are taken from the reading passage 'Death cigarettes'. Find the words in the passage. Check the lines given in brackets. They will help you to find the words easily.

- 5-10) lungs (n): two organs in your body that you use for breathing.
1. _____ (v): to suddenly fall down or become completely weak.
- (13-19) 2. _____ (adj): unusual and interesting; noticeable.
3. _____ (v): to advertise a product in order to sell it.
- (20-25) 4. _____ (adj): easy to notice or understand; clear.
5. _____ (n): something you say or write publicly or officially.
- (45-50) 6. _____ (n): a box in which a dead person is buried.
7. _____ (v): to stay away from something or somebody.
- (50-55) 8. _____ (v): to put something in a place where nobody can see or find it.
- (55-60) 9. _____ (v): to tell people the truth about something bad or dishonest.
10. _____ (n): saying one thing, while, secretly believing something else.
- (60-65) 11. _____ (adj): huge; very large.
12. _____ (n): the amount of money you spend on something; cost.
- (100-103) 13. _____ (adj): unusual and strange.

POST-READING

PREPOSITIONS:

Read the passage below. Complete each blank space with one of the prepositions listed below. You may use the prepositions more than once.

| | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|
| for | in | of | to |
|-----|----|----|----|

Most people know that cigarette smoking is harmful (1) _____ their health. Scientific research shows that it causes many kinds (2) _____ diseases. (3) _____ fact, many people who smoke get lung cancer. However, Edward Gilson has lung cancer, and he has never smoked cigarettes. He lives with his wife, Evelyn, who has smoked about a pack (4) _____ cigarettes a day throughout their marriage. The Gilsons have been married (5) _____ 35 years.

No one knows (6) _____ sure why Mr. Gilson has lung cancer. Nevertheless, doctors believe that passive smoke may cause lung cancer (7) _____ people who do not smoke. Non-smokers often breathe (8) _____ the smoke from other people's cigarettes. This is passive smoking. Edward Gilson has been breathing this type (9) _____ smoke for 35 years. Now he is dying (10) _____ lung cancer. However, he is not alone. About 53,000 people die (11) _____ the United States each year as a result (12) _____ passive smoking.

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SUGGESTED APPROACH

*See Int-Headway Teacher's Book for further suggestions (p.97)

PRE-READING STAGE:

- ◆ You might do the pre-reading tasks (1&2&3&4) given in the Student's Book (p.100)

WHILE-READING STAGE:

- ◆ First, do the additional vocabulary task. Students skim the reading passage to find the words for which the definitions are given:

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| 1. collapse | 2. remarkable | 3. market | 4. obvious | 5. statement |
| 6. coffin | 7. avoid | 8. hide | 9. expose | 10. hypocrisy |
| 11. vast | 12. expense | 13. weird | | |

- ◆ Do the Comprehension Check questions and Language Work part given in the Student's Book (p.102).

POST-READING STAGE:

- ◆ Do the additional prepositions practice.

- | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. FOR | 2. OF | 3. IN | 4. OF | 5. FOR | 6. FOR |
| 7. IN | 8. IN | 9. OF | 10. OF | 11. IN | 12. OF |

- ◆ You might do the DISCUSSION Part given in the Student's Book, p.102