

Effect of Readers Theater on Reading Comprehension Skills and Reading Motivation among Students of Turkish as a Foreign Language

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: May 05, 2023

Accepted: July 10, 2023

Published: July 31, 2023

Volume: 11 Issue: 3

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: None

ABSTRACT

Different methods, techniques and strategies are employed in teaching to improve reading, especially comprehension skills to ensure reading motivation. The aim of this study is to determine the effect of readers theater on reading comprehension skills and reading motivation in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In the study, in which an exploratory mixed design in which quantitative and qualitative research methods were used together was preferred, the subjects were determined by convenience sampling. Accordingly, 61 B1 level students (31 experimental, 30 control) learning Turkish as a foreign language at a state university in southern Turkey were assigned as the experimental and control groups. Reading comprehension achievement test was used to collect data in the study., reading motivation scale and semi-structured interview form were used to collect data. Dependent and independent groups t-test was used to analyze quantitative data; descriptive analysis and content analysis were used to analyze qualitative data. The results reveal that the reading theater technique had a positive effect on the reading comprehension skills and reading motivation of the students in the experimental group. In addition, it was determined that the students expressed positive opinions about the reading theater. Based on these results, it is suggested that reading theater technique should be used to increase the reading motivation of Turkish as a foreign language learner and improve their reading comprehension skills.

Key words: Reading Theater, Reading Skills, Reading Comprehension, Reading Motivation, Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important way of learning and information that individuals need throughout their lives, both to be academically successful and to enrich their world of emotion and thought in daily life (Cemiloğlu, 2004; Kavcar et al., 2016). Reading is not only the act of seeing or vocalizing, but also a multidimensional learning field that covers perception, comprehension and interpretation processes and activates high-level skills such as analysis and synthesis (Güneş, 2007).

Literacy is an important skill in mother tongue and foreign language teaching. Literacy basically requires the effective use of all language skills. However, reading take place in the center of this skill. Reading, which means making sense of what is intended to be given in the text rather than vocalizing what is written, should result in making meaning at the end, regardless of the purpose for which it is done (Ateş, 2008; Yılmaz, 2014). It is not possible to say that reading without comprehension serves a purpose (Temizkan, 2008). In the process of reading comprehension, it is not enough to know the meaning of the word read; high-level mental skills such as comprehension, mental structuring, relationship building,

analysis-synthesis, interpretation and evaluation also come into play (Güneş, 2017). In addition, identifying problems in the read text and producing different solutions to them is also an indicator of reading comprehension (Akyol, 2006).

In the reading processes in the mother tongue and in foreign languages, students have different backgrounds in terms of knowledge about the vocabulary, grammar and discourse structure of the language (Hasırcı, 2006). However, in both cases, it is expected that cognitive and psycho-motor skills are used together for the act of reading, written symbols are transformed into meaningful units (Demirel, 2021) and a meaning is made from the text read. The native speaker implicitly knows these features of the language. In the process of learning a foreign language, these skills are acquired simultaneously. This shows that the reading process in a second/foreign language has a more difficult and complex structure than the reading process in the first language (Aygüneş, 2007). Reading in a foreign language is basically a dynamic and interactive process in which the learner makes the symbols in the written text meaningful on the basis of the features and rules of the target language by

activating his/her native language knowledge and using his/her existing knowledge (Singhal, 2001). In teaching Turkish as a foreign language, reading is a process that requires the reader to mentally recognize elements such as sound, syllable, vocabulary, sentence structure on the one hand, and on the other hand, to comprehend the meaning in the text by putting his/her prior knowledge and worldview to work (Altunkaya & Erdem, 2017).

Reading education aims to raise readers who can make sense of what they read, comprehend the main idea, auxiliary ideas, structure, genre, language and narrative features of the text, and thus decode the message of the text. In the process of learning a foreign language, it is aimed to raise individuals who obtain the information they need through reading, who perform reading both as a means of obtaining information and as an enjoyable activity, and who interpret and criticize what they read. The main goal of foreign language reading education is to enable foreign language learners to understand and interpret the written text in the target language correctly (Güzel & Barın, 2013). This also improves their literacy skills. Literacy is a skill in foreign language teaching that refers to a learner's ability to understand what they read and express themselves in writing.

The aim of reading comprehension activities in foreign language teaching is not to know the meanings of the words in a text, but to reveal the author's message (Demirel, 2021). For this reason, it is necessary to emphasize both the pronunciation and meaning dimensions of reading. However, it is also difficult for individuals who do not vocalize the words correctly and cannot read fast to reach meaning. Fluent reading, one of the most important indicators of reading comprehension, comes into play at this stage (Bilge, 2015). Fluent reading is vocalizing the text correctly, quickly and in accordance with prosody. Speed, correct reading and prosody, which are the elements of fluent reading, ensure reaching meaning. These aspects either facilitate or restrict comprehension during oral and silent reading (Kuhn et al., 2010). Considering that students with comprehension difficulties generally cannot read fluently, it can be stated that fluent reading is a necessary skill for comprehension (Aşıkcan, 2019). Therefore, fluent reading should be emphasized to improve reading comprehension skills.

In teaching reading skills in a foreign language, it is necessary to make sense of the relationships between word, structure, rule and discourse in the other language. For this, the instructor is expected to inform and lead the learner by using certain strategies and then the learner is expected to develop and use these strategies (Razı & Razı, 2014). In reading education classes, facilitating the comprehension of the text and motivating students are at the forefront. For this purpose, the strategies applied by language instructors may vary (Singhal, 2001). Especially at the basic level, some grammatical rules need to be known in order to realize reading comprehension. In addition, in reading lessons, language instructors should provide preliminary information about the text, use strategies that encourage students to make inferences, and evaluate after reading and check whether reading comprehension has been realized (Ak Baçoğul & Aksu, 2016).

In teaching Turkish as a foreign language, a number of strategies are employed before, during and after reading to improve reading comprehension skills (Lems et al., 2010). The main purpose of pre-reading activities is to mobilize prior knowledge, to provide information about the content of the subject to be read and to determine the purpose of reading. In this way, the reader intuitively on which subject he/she will read a text and activates his/her existing knowledge on this subject (Özdemir, 2017). In teaching reading in the first language, the student has implicit knowledge based on his/her basic knowledge and culture, and therefore has a high level of readiness in this process. In foreign/second language teaching, on the other hand, it is necessary to support the readiness of the student who has deficiencies in both other skills and culture. Otherwise, the development of reading skills may be delayed (Karakuş Tayşi, 2017). In the activities during reading, it is aimed for students to understand the message that the author wants to convey (Demirel, 2021). In the post-reading phase, the aim is to reinforce the grammar rules of the language learned and to improve reading skills. The goal to be achieved at the end of the stages is to increase motivation and realize reading comprehension (Demiriz, 2022).

There is a reciprocal relationship between motivation and achievement in foreign/second language teaching; high motivation brings success in the learning process and motivation increases when success is achieved (Cook, 2008). Moreover, motivation and purpose are related to each other. Especially in teaching reading skills, students are expected to have a purpose in order to be motivated (Grabe, 1991). Students who lack motivation have problems in achieving long-term goals. On the other hand, students who are less skilled in language or have less favorable conditions can be successful with high motivation (Dörnyei, 1998). In this respect, teachers' motivating their students facilitates the process of learning the target language (Yüce, 2016).

Readers Theater

There are many strategies that can be used before, during and after reading to improve students' reading comprehension skills in mother tongue and foreign language teaching. These strategies improve reading comprehension skills by enabling students to take an active and continuous role in the reading process. One of the effective methods to ensure that students enjoy the reading process and develop a positive attitude towards reading is readers theater. Readers theater is an approach in which students with different reading levels work together in cooperation and contribute to each other's learning (Young et al., 2017).

Readers theater is a performance based on repetitive and guided reading of the dialogues turned into a script of a written text in accordance with the role-playing technique (Wolf, 1993; Young & Rasinski, 2009). In this performance, there is no text-dependent memorization; however, it is necessary to read the texts several times. This strategy, which differs from theater in that it does not require memorization, costumes, props, scenery and long preparations, basically focusing on reading skills. What needs to be considered during

the implementation of the strategy is to choose a text that is suitable for the level and interests of the students, with plenty of dialogues, and to transform this text into a scenario. The content and message of the text transformed into theater are not interfered with. Dialogues are created based on the plot and speech sentences movement. Descriptions are given through the speeches of the event protagonist. Each student then prepares for the section they will read. At the end of the reading-comprehension activities carried out through a text, students showcase their performances to their friends and teachers after some preparatory work. As a result of these activities, it is expected that students' fluent reading skills will increase because students try to read the text quickly and fluently as if they were speaking in order to portray the characters they will replace in a good way (Akyol, 2014). It is aimed to improve students' reading skills through model reading, repeated reading, paired reading, reading comprehension and vocabulary teaching activities carried out before the animation. The evaluation/discussion activities after the presentation aim to enable students to develop their self- and peer-evaluation skills with both their own and their friends' reading performances (Kanık Uysal, 2021).

Readers theater is a type of reading used in reading education and directly related to creative drama (McCaslin, 1990). The aim of this type of reading is to make students intuit the language and structure of the text and the characteristics of the person and entity cast in the text (Şimşek, 2007). As a matter of fact, reading the text by giving students roles improves fluency and comprehension and provides reading motivation. In readers theater, acting out the characters in the text allows students to read the text over and over again while practicing their roles. In order for the student to fully reflect the emotions of the character, it is essential to understand him/her. Therefore, readers theater is also an effective strategy to increase fluency in reading. Transforming stories into scenario texts within the scope of readers theater also develops skills related to recognizing and comprehending the structural features of the text (subject, theme, narrator, point of view, time, etc.) (Dilidüzgün & Kuyumcu, 2013). In readers theater, which includes more than one strategy, methods such as model reading, repeated reading, paired reading and choral reading are used to improve students' fluent reading skills (Köse, 2022).

It is carried out by a guide with a higher reading level, guiding and repeating the reading to other people (the audience) in the environment (Young & Rasinski, 2009). In practice, students are given the opportunity to work on the words they have difficulty with and to repeat the text so that they can read the text fluently before they perform reading (Broadus & Ivey, 2002). Giving roles to students helps them to improve their reading speed and comprehension, and also helps them to be motivated (Akyol, 2014). Readers theater helps students to understand the fictional reality by putting themselves in the place of the protagonist in the text and taking on the role. In this way, reading comprehension skills also improve. In order for students to make sense of the text, they need to read the text accurately and fluently, paying attention to stress and intonation. Therefore, pronunciation,

stress, intonation, pronunciation, speed and word recognition are among the basic indicators of fluent reading and a prerequisite for comprehension (Güneş, 2000).

Readers theater is an effective method in developing fluent reading, comprehension, word recognition, prosody skills and eliminating reading errors in teaching Turkish as a mother tongue (Millin & Rinehart, 1999; Carrick, 2000; Keehn, 2003; Young & Rasinski, 2009; Caudill-Hansen, 2009; Smith, 2011; Vasinda & McLeod, 2011; Sezgin & Akyol, 2015; Young et al., 2019; Suggs, 2019; Babacan, 2020; Kanık Uysal, 2020; Babacan & Yıldız, 2022). In addition, studies on reading fluency skills in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are limited. For example, Güngör (2019) tried to determine the reading aloud errors, reading speeds and the predictive levels of these variables on reading comprehension of Turkish as a foreign language learners. As a result of the study, it was determined that B1 level students made more reading aloud errors than A and C level students. This finding reveals that less proficient readers are prone to make more reading aloud errors (Pillai & Paramasivam, 2014 as cited in Güngör, 2019).

In the literature, there are no studies examining the effect of readers theater on the reading skills of Turkish as a foreign language learners. For this reason, there is a need for studies that reveal the effectiveness of readers theater in the development of reading skills of students at different language levels. As a matter of fact, the main purpose of reading is to reach comprehension and in order to reach this purpose, the problems that students experience in the reading-comprehension process should be tried to be eliminated by using appropriate methods and techniques. It is thought that the readers theater method will provide a fun and effective learning environment and guide students to overcome the difficulties they experience in the reading process. Using reading theater as a method in foreign language teaching can have a significant role in supporting the development of language and literacy skills in both the first and second language.

Research Aim and Questions

In this study, it is aimed to determine the effect of readers theater on reading comprehension skills and reading motivation in teaching Turkish as a foreign language and to get students' opinions about this technique. The main problem of the research is "What is the effect of readers theater technique on reading comprehension skills and reading motivation of Turkish as a foreign language learners?". The sub-problems of the research are as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference between the reading comprehension skill test scores of the students in the experimental group using readers theater and the control group using traditional reading methods?
2. Is there a significant difference between the reading motivation test scores of the students in the experimental group using readers theater and the control group using traditional reading methods?
3. What are the opinions of the students in the experimental group about the readers theater?

METHOD

Research Model

In the study, mixed method was used, which combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques in a single study (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In this study, in which the exploratory sequential design, one of the mixed method designs, was preferred, quantitative data were first collected and analyzed; then semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students in the experimental group to support the quantitative data (Creswell, 2014).

In the quantitative design of the study, pretest-post-test control group experimental design was used. In this design, there are two groups, one experimental and one control, formed by random assignment, and measurements are made in both groups before and after the experiment (Karasar, 2012). In the experimental group, readers theater was used throughout the 6-week intervention, while in the control group, no method other than traditional reading methods of reading aloud and silent reading was used. In the qualitative part of the study, which was designed as a case study, the data were collected through semi-structured interviews in which the views of the participants in the experimental group on fluent reading strategies were obtained.

Participants

Study group in the research, easily accessible situation sample was determined by convenience sampling method. In convenience sampling easily accessible situation, the researcher selects a situation that is close and easy to access in order to gain speed and practicality to the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this study, 31 students who learned Turkish as a foreign language at B1 level at Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University Turkish Language Teaching Center (TÖMER) in Turkey in 2021-2022 academic year were appointed as the experimental group and 30 students were appointed as the control group. Comparative information on the descriptive characteristics of the students in the experimental and control groups is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that 35.4% of the students in the experimental group were 18-22 years old, 32.2% were 23-27 years old, 19.3% were 28-32 years old, and 12.9% were 33 years old or older; 30% of the students in the control group were 18-22 years old, 26.6% were 23-27 years old, 23.3% were 28-32 years old, and 20% were 33 years old or older. According to gender characteristics, 70.9% of the students in the experimental group were female and 29% were male; 60% of the students in the control group were female and 40% were male. The difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of both characteristics was found to be statistically insignificant at the $p>0.05$ significance level. When the countries of the students are analyzed, Russia (25.8%), Ukraine (22.5%), Kazakhstan (12.9%) and Iran (12.9%) were the most common countries in the experimental group; Ukraine (23.3%), Kazakhstan (16.6%), Russia (13.3%) and Saudi Arabia (13.3%) were the most common countries in the control group.

The qualitative dimension of the research was limited to 25 students selected on the basis of volunteerism in order to

Table 1. Characteristics of the participants

Features	Experimental Group (n=31)		Control Group (n=30)	
	f	%	f	%
Age				
18-22 age	11	35.4	9	30
23-27 age	10	32.2	8	26.6
28-32 age	6	19.3	7	23.3
33+	4	12.9	6	20
Gender				
Woman	22	70.9	18	60
Male	9	29	12	40
Country				
Russia	8	25.8	4	13.3
Ukraine	7	22.5	7	23.3
Kazakhstan	4	12.9	5	16.6
Iran	4	12.9	2	6.6
Saudi Arabia	2	6.4	4	13.3
Uzbekistan	2	6.4	2	6.6
Czechia	1	3.2	-	-
Germany	1	3.2	-	-
Turkmenistan	1	3.2	1	3.3
Poland	-	-	1	3.3
Yemen	-	-	2	6.6
Iraq	1	3.2	2	6.6
Total	31	100	30	100

reveal the opinions and thoughts of the students in the experimental group about the readers theater in depth.

Data Collection Tools

In the study, Turkish as a Foreign Language Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale were used to obtain quantitative data. The semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher was used to obtain quantitative data.

Turkish as a foreign language reading comprehension achievement test

In this study, a reading comprehension achievement test developed by Altunkaya (2016) for B-level students learning Turkish as a foreign language was applied to measure reading comprehension skills. The KR-20 reliability of the test consisting of 45 reading comprehension questions was calculated as .88. The item difficulties of the 45 questions in the test vary between .30 and .80. The score to be obtained from the test was calculated as 1 for each correct answer and 0 for incorrect and blank answers. Therefore, the lowest score that can be obtained from the test is 0 and the highest score is 45 (Altunkaya, 2016). According to Özçelik (2010), it is recommended that the reliability for tests used in education should not fall below 0.80, except for tests with very few questions,

and that it should be above 0.90 for tests that will be used to obtain measures that will form the basis for serious decisions for students. In this study, the KR-20 reliability coefficient of the achievement test was .87 and the KR-21 reliability coefficient was .86. This shows that the test is reliable.

Reading motivation scale

In the study, the Reading Motivation Scale developed by Dündar and Çocuk (2019) was used to determine the motivation of Turkish as a foreign language learners for reading. The scale consists of 29 items and has 4 sub-factors: ‘encouragement’ factor (items 1-7), ‘motivation’ factor (items 8-14), ‘interest in texts’ factor (items 15-20), ‘competition’ factor (items 21-25), ‘lack of motivation towards reading’ factor (items 25-29).

The 5-point Likert-type rating scale has 5 options ranging from “Strongly disagree (1)” to “Strongly agree (5)”. The Cronbach-alpha value calculated for the whole scale is 0.83. In this study, the Cronbach-alpha value was recalculated and it was detected that the test was reliable (0.85).

Semi-structured interview form

After the end of the implementation process, the semi-structured interview technique was used to fully and deeply reveal the opinions of the students in the experimental group about the application. The interview, which is conducted in the form of question-answer around a purpose, is a reciprocal, interactive and discovery-oriented technique in which the views and opinions of the participants on certain issues are taken (Cohen et al., 2011; Glesne, 2013).

The draft interview form, which was created by reviewing the relevant literature, was presented to three experts from the fields of Turkish language education (f=2) and measurement and evaluation (f=1) for content validity. As a result of the feedback received, the form was finalized. In the final form, the students were asked “Were you satisfied

with the application? Please state the reasons.” and “Please state the benefits of the readers theater with the reasons.” 2 questions were asked.

Process

The implementation of the experimental study was carried out by the researcher himself within the framework of reading activities in Turkish as a foreign language course. In the study, 31 B1 level students studying at Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University Turkish Language Teaching Center in the fall semester of 2021-2022 academic year were selected as the experimental group and 30 students were selected as the control group. Before the experimental procedure, the tests to be used in the research (Achievement Test and Motivation Scale) were applied as pretests in order to determine the current situation of the students in the experimental group. One week prior to the application covers the preliminary preparation process for the actual application. At this stage, the readers theater technique was introduced to the students and they were made to practice on a sample text. During the implementation process, the students in the experimental group read and acted out the reading texts in the lesson with the readers theater technique. After the six-week implementation, the Achievement Test and Motivation Scale were reapplied to the students as a post-test. In the control group, the lessons were conducted with only reading aloud and silent reading techniques under the guidance of the instructor. Readers theater was not used in this group. After the six-week implementation, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students in the experimental group (f=25) on a voluntary basis. The process steps of the experimental process are shown in Figure 1.

The reading texts used in the implementation phase were selected from the Yeni İstanbul TÖMER textbook in accordance with the level of the students. The practices were carried out for 6 weeks, once a week for three hours each. The

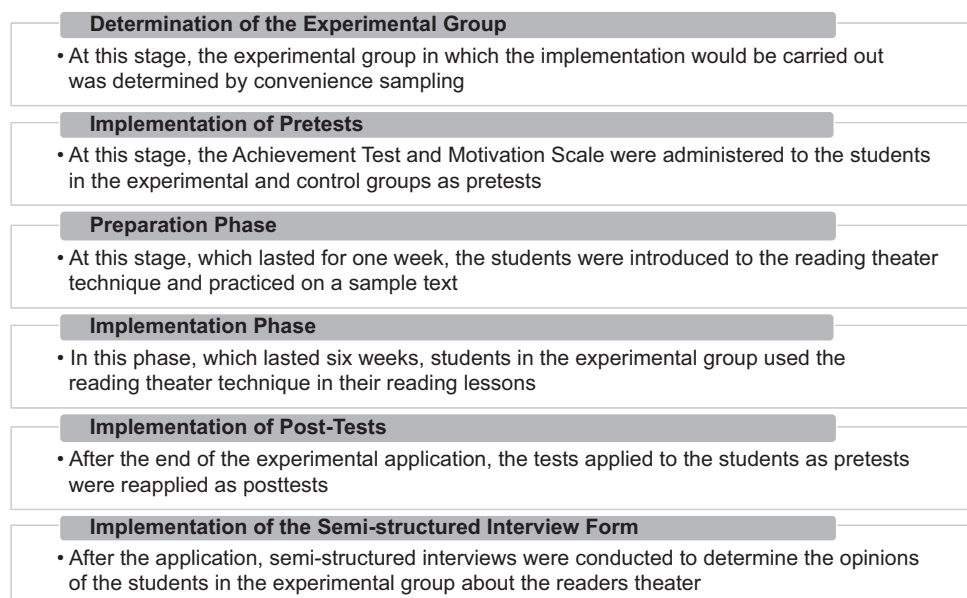


Figure 1. Steps of the experimental process

readers theater technique was used every week during the intervention, which lasted a total of 18 hours. In the control group, reading lessons were conducted with reading aloud and silent reading methods, and the readers theater technique was not used.

Data analysis

In the analysis of quantitative data, t test was applied for independent and dependent groups and these analyzes were performed on the computer with SPSS 22.00 statistical package program.

All Skewness and Kurtosis values were found to be between -1.96 and + 1.96 as a result of the analyzes performed to understand the conformity of the data to normal distribution (Table 2). In addition, the histogram, Q-Q and Detrendet graphs were also found to fit the normal distribution. Since these findings showed that the data fit the normal distribution, parametric analyses applied in groups with a sample size exceeding 30 were used to analyze the data.

The data related to the qualitative dimension of the study were resolved by descriptive analysis and content analysis. Accordingly, the data obtained from the opinions of the students in the experimental group about the implementation process were resolved by bringing them together under certain themes. Direct quotations from student opinions were also included. Expert comments on themes were cross-checked to ensure reliability in qualitative data analysis. Accordingly, 80% of the data were independently coded by another field expert (Turkish education) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Cohen's Kappa statistic was used to compare and evaluate different codings created by independent coders. Accordingly, 0.80 and above was considered very good agreement and acceptable reliability. Inter-rater reliability was then calculated as a percentage and found to be high (94%). Two language trainers working on a similar topic also analyzed the emerging themes and reached a consensus.

FINDINGS

Findings of the Quantitative Data Analysis

Comparison of pretests of experimental and control groups

The comparison of the pretest scores of the students in the experimental and control groups from the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and the Reading Motivation Scale before prior to implementation is given in Table 3.

Before the application, the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the experimental group was 17.32 and the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the control group was 17.30, and the differences between the pretest scores were not significant at $p>0.05$ level of significance. As a result, it can be said that there is no difference between the students in the experimental and control groups in terms of the pretest scores of the Achievement Test before the application.

Before the application, the arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the experimental group

was 66.81 and the arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the control group was 67.43, and the differences between the pretest scores were not significant at $p>0.05$ level of significance. As a result, it can be said that there is no difference between the students in the experimental and control groups in terms of the pretest scores of the Motivation Scale before the application.

All these findings show that there is no difference between the students in the experimental and control groups in terms of the pretest scores of the Achievement Test and the Motivation Scale before the application, the groups are equivalent to each other and the research can be started (Figure 2).

Comparison of post-tests of experimental and control groups

The comparison of the post-test scores of the students in the experimental and control groups from the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale after the application is given in Table 4.

Table 2. Skewness and kurtosis values

	Skewness	Kurtosis
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (Pretest)	0.065	0.013
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (Post-test)	-0.239	-1.101
Reading Motivation Scale (Pretest)	-0.108	-0.598
Reading Motivation Scale (Post-test)	-0.065	-1.820

Table 3. Comparison of experimental and control groups' reading comprehension achievement test and reading motivation scale pretest scores

	n	M	S.s.	t	p
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test					
Experiment	31	17.32	3.28	0.029	0.977
Control	30	17.30	2.79		
Reading Motivation Scale					
Experiment	31	66.81	4.73	0.522	0.603
Control	30	67.43	4.64		

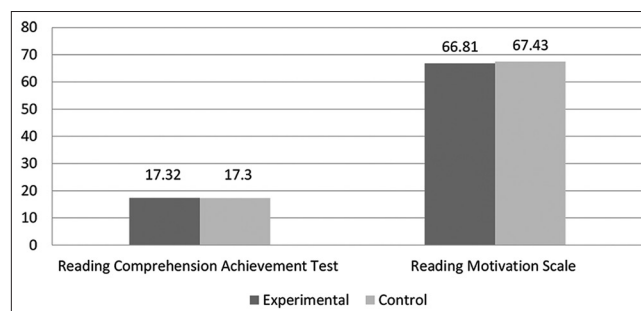


Figure 2. Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale Pretest Score Averages of Students in Experimental and Control Groups

According to Table 4, the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the experimental group is 38.81, the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the control group is 28.07 and the differences between the post-test scores are significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. As a result, it can be said that there is a difference between the students in the experimental and control groups in terms of the post-test scores of the Achievement Test after the application in favor of the experimental group.

The arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the experimental group was 110.48, the arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the control group was 75.43 and the differences between the post-test scores were significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. As a result, it can be said that there is a difference between the students in the experimental and control groups in terms of the post-test scores of the Motivation Scale after the application in favor of the experimental group.

All these findings show that there is a difference in favor of the experimental group in terms of the post-test scores of the Achievement Test and the Motivation Scale of the students in the experimental and control groups (Figure 3).

Comparison of pre and post-tests in itself the experimental group

The comparison of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the experimental group before and after the application of the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale is given in Table 5.

Table 4. Comparison of reading comprehension achievement test and reading motivation scale post-test scores of experimental and control groups

	n	M	S.s.	t	p
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test					
Experiment	31	38.81	3.11	11.499	0.000
Control	30	28.07	4.13		
Reading Motivation Scale					
Experiment	31	110.48	4.25	29.076	0.000
Control	30	75.43	5.14		

Table 5. Comparison of reading comprehension achievement test and reading motivation scale pretest-post-test scores of students in the experimental group

	n	M	S.s.	t	p
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test					
Pretest	31	17.32	3.28	45.676	0.000
Post-test	31	38.81	3.11		
Reading Motivation Scale					
Pretest	31	66.81	4.73	41.813	0.000
Post-test	31	110.48	4.25		

The arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the experimental group before the application was 17.32, the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test after the application was 38.81, and the differences between the pretest and post-test scores were significant in favor of the post-test at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. This finding shows that there is a difference in favor of the post-test in terms of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the experimental group.

The arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the experimental group before the application was 66.81, the arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale after the application was 110.48, and the differences between the pretest and post-test scores were significant in favor of the post-test at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. This finding shows that there is a difference in favor of the post-test in terms of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the experimental group.

As a result, it can be said that the students in the experimental group increased their Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale scores after the application (Figure 4).

Comparison of pre and post tests in itself the control group

The comparison of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the control group in the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale before and after the application is given in Table 6.

The arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test of the students in the control group before the application was 17.30,

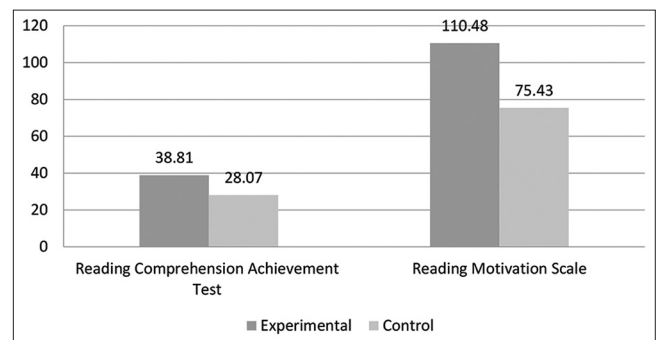


Figure 3. Posttest Scores of the Students in the Experimental and Control Groups in the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivations Test

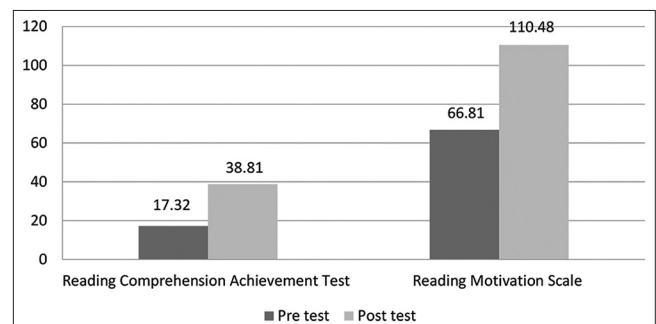


Figure 4. Experimental Group Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale Pretest Post-Test Score Averages

the arithmetic mean of the Achievement Test after the application was 28.07, and the differences between the pretest and post-test scores were significant in favor of the post-test at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. This finding shows that there is a difference in favor of the post-test in terms of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the control group.

The arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale of the students in the control group before the application was 67.43, the arithmetic mean of the Motivation Scale after the application was 75.43, and the differences between the pretest and post-test scores were significant in favor of the post-test at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. This finding shows that there is a difference in favor of the post-test in terms of the pretest and post-test scores of the students in the control group.

As a result, it can be said that the students in the control group increased their Achievement Test and Motivation Scale scores after the intervention (Figure 5).

As a general result, it is seen that there is an increase in terms of post-tests in the experimental group where reading theater was applied and in the control group where traditional reading methods were applied. In other words, it can be said that the reading comprehension skills and reading motivation of the students in both groups increased. However, according to Figure 5, the highest increase is seen in the experimental group.

Findings of the Qualitative Data Analysis

At the end of the application, semi-structured interview technique was applied to support the quantitative data with

Table 6. Comparison of reading comprehension achievement test and reading motivation scale pretest and post-test scores of students in the control group

	n	M	S.s.	t	p
Reading Comprehension Achievement Test					
Pretest	30	17.30	2.79	14.415	0.000
Post-test	30	28.07	4.13		
Reading Motivation Scale					
Pretest	30	67.43	4.64	6.021	0.000
Post-test	30	75.43	5.14		

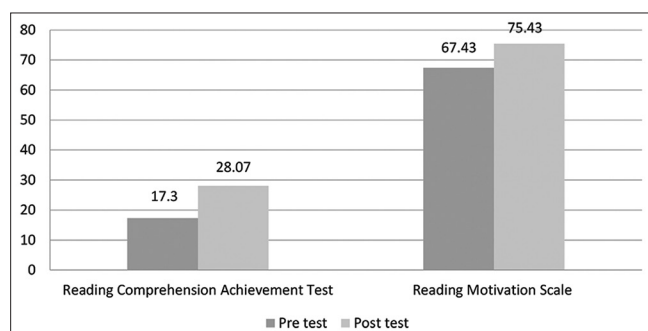


Figure 5. Control Group Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement Test and Reading Motivation Scale Pretest-Post-test Score Averages

qualitative data and to get the opinions of the students in the experimental group about the readers theater. In the interviews conducted with 25 students on a voluntary basis, two questions were asked to the participants. These questions were aimed at determining the participants' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the readers theater and their reasons and their views on the benefits of this method. The data obtained were first subjected to descriptive and then content analysis, codes and themes were determined, and frequency and percentage analyzes were made. The findings are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

After application, the students in the experimental group were asked whether they were satisfied with the readers theater and the reasons for this. According to Table 7, the majority of the students in the experimental group ($n=21$) stated that they were satisfied with the application, while some students ($f=6$) stated that they were not satisfied. Four students stated that they were not satisfied with the implementation at all. However, students who were generally satisfied with the practice also expressed some negativities. When the opinions of the students who were satisfied with the readers theater are examined, it is seen that the themes of fast reading (76.1%), enjoyment (71.4%), and cooperation (66.6%) come to the fore. The opinions of the students who were dissatisfied with the application were concentrated in the themes of incompatibility (33.3%), boredom (33.3%) and anxiety (33.3%).

Table 8 shows the students' views on the benefits of readers theater. The benefits that the students expressed about the readers theater were grouped under the themes of reading speed, prosody, motivation, having fun, pronunciation, comprehension and reducing reading errors. Accordingly, 84% of the students stated that the readers theater enabled them to read faster, 80% stated that it improved their prosody skills, 80% stated that it increased motivation and provided a fun time, 11% stated that it improved pronunciation and comprehension skills, and 5% stated that it reduced reading errors.

DISCUSSION

In this study, a significant difference was found in favor of the experimental group in terms of reading comprehension skills at the end of the experimental process between the experimental group in which readers theater was applied and the control group in which traditional (silent and oral) reading methods were applied. As a result of the application, an increase was observed in the reading comprehension post-test scores of the students in the experimental and control groups. However, it is noteworthy that the increase in the experimental group was higher than the control group. This result shows that readers theater positively affects the reading comprehension skills of Turkish as a foreign language learners. Most studies in the literature also reveal that readers theater positively affects reading comprehension skills in both native and foreign languages (Millin, 1996; Millin & Rinehart, 1999; Carrick, 2000; Corcoran & Davis, 2005; Keehn et al., 2008; Caudill-Hansen, 2009; Young & Rasinski, 2009; Smith, 2011; Suggs, 2019; Young et al., 2019; Babacan, 2020; Kanık Uysal, 2018; Köse, 2022).

Table 7. Opinions on satisfaction with the readers theater

Theme	Opinion/Code	f	%
Yes			
Fast reading	This method improved my reading. (S3)	16	76.1
	With this method, my reading speeded up a bit. (S4)		
Enjoyment	This reading method is fun. (S22)	15	71.4
	It was nice to act out the text. (S5)		
Cooperation	My partner helped me in reading. (S11)	14	66.6
	There was cooperation in the distribution of roles. (S12)		
No			
Incompatibility	I had incompatibility with my partner in reading. (S9)	2	33.3
	My friend's Turkish was insufficient. (S21)		
Boredom	It is boring to act out the text all the time. (S17)	2	33.3
	It was boring to read the same text again. (S24)		
Anxiety	Acting made me anxious. (S2)	2	33.3
	I had difficulty because the text was long. (S3)		

Table 8. Opinions on the provided by benefits of readers theater

Theme	Opinion/Code	f	%
Reading Speed	This method improved my reading. (S3)	21	84
	My reading has accelerated, so my interest in reading has increased. (S4)		
Prosody	My stress, intonation and pronunciation skills improved. (S5)	20	80
	I had less difficulty in making Turkish sounds. (S9)		
Motivation	My partner helped me in paired reading. (S11)	20	80
	My desire to read the text increased. (S17)		
Enjoyment	It was fun to read by animating. (S22)	18	72
	Reading straight was boring. This is more fun. (S7)		
Pronunciation	It became easier to vocalize Turkish words. (S23)	11	44
	My pronunciation skills improved (S10)		
Understanding	Re-reading the text helped me understand it. (S17)	11	44
	I understood better while reading. (S24)		
Reducing Reading Errors	My ability to read without spelling has improved. (S22)	5	20
	My errors such as pausing, misreading etc., have decreased. (S25)		

Babacan (2020) examined the effect of readers theater on reading and comprehension skills in his study with fourth grade students. Kanık Uysal (2020), on the other hand, aimed to describe the process of using the readers theater method in developing fluent reading skills in his action research with fifth grade students. Köse (2022) tried to reveal the effect of the readers theater method on improving the reading skills of students at different reading levels. Mraz et al. (2013) also found that readers theater was effective in improving third grade students' fluent reading skills. The common point of all these studies is that readers theater is effective on students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills in their mother tongue. In this study, on the other hand, Turkish as a foreign language learners were studied and similar results were obtained. Therefore, although it needs to be tested more, it can be said that readers theater is effective in second language or foreign language teaching, especially in developing reading fluency and comprehension skills.

Apart from these studies, it is noteworthy that studies on the use of fluent reading strategies in teaching Turkish as a foreign language are limited. Çiftçi (2015) found that Turkish EFL learners' reading errors decreased and their comprehension skills improved thanks to the repeated reading method. Some studies have also revealed that repeated and choral reading has a positive effect on the reading fluency and reading comprehension skills of EFL learners (Hocker, 2004; Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2008; Landa, 2009; Roundy & Roundy, 2009; Chang, 2012; Topping, 2014; Dolean et al., 2017). Repeated reading is also based on the Repeated reading method, which involves reading and practicing a text multiple times and then applying it. In the practice of readers theater, the student reads the text again. The purpose of repeated reading here is to develop prosodic reading skills that reflect the meaning of the text rather than to increase reading speed (Young & Rasinski, 2018). In this respect, repeated reading can also be considered within readers theater.

In this study, it was determined that the readers theater technique also positively affected the reading motivation of Turkish as a foreign language learners. Accordingly, a significant difference was found in favor of the experimental group in terms of the post-test scores of the reading motivation scale of the experimental and control groups at the end of the experimental process. This result shows that readers theater positively affects the reading motivation levels of Turkish as a foreign language learners. In the literature, it is emphasized that especially the readers theater technique positively affects students' motivation in the process of mother tongue teaching. For example, in the studies of Aktaş and Çankal (2019) and Köse (2022), students found that they enjoyed readers theater activities and had fun during the implementation of these activities. These results reveal that readers theater is effective in providing motivation in both mother tongue and foreign language learning process.

In this study, the opinions of the students in the experimental group about the application were also taken. Accordingly, the majority of the students expressed positive opinions about the readers theater. Within the scope of the results obtained from semi-structured interviews, the students stated that they were satisfied with the readers theater, emphasized that this reading strategy provided motivation, made the lesson fun, reduced anxiety, and emphasized cooperation. In addition, foreign students stated that the repeated and paired reading activities carried out within the scope of readers theater practices positively affected their social skills and friendship relations. The students also stated that these activities helped them see and correct each other's and their own mistakes and provide peer support to each other. Many studies in the literature also emphasize that fluent reading strategies, especially readers theater, create a positive classroom climate and learning environment by motivating students to learn. For example, Köse (2022) concluded in his study that readers theater positively affected the friendship relations of 5th grade students, increased their motivation and enabled them to actively participate in reading activities. Similarly, Aktaş and Çankal (2019) revealed in their study that primary school students had positive opinions about fluent reading strategies, especially readers theater. Readers theater enables students to actively participate in the implementation process, to receive peer support through group work, to increase interest, desire and motivation for reading, and to support students' development in many ways. In this study, students expressed their satisfaction with this strategy for reasons such as enjoyment, gaining a sense of responsibility and improving reading skills. Similarly, Köse (2022) stated in his study that students enjoyed reading with their friends in readers theater practices, that they did not get bored of the lesson, and that they were able to notice and correct each other's mistakes. Carrick (2000) argues that readers theater contributes to the enthusiasm of even the most reluctant students towards reading, increases their interest in reading and thus contributes to the development of a sense of confidence. Suggs (2019) stated in his study that fifth-grade students found readers theater practices fun, enjoyed group work, increased their self-confidence in reading and reading motivation, and gained phonemic awareness thanks

to these practices. All these results show that this method has a positive effect on students' motivation for reading. The sample group of this study was students who learn Turkish as a foreign language. However, similar results were obtained. In this study, the students stated that they enjoyed the readers theater, they liked group work, they found the opportunity to notice and correct their reading mistakes while working with their peers, they started to read by paying attention to punctuation marks, stress and intonation, and as their reading skills improved, they gained self-confidence and their interest in reading increased.

In this study, students who learn Turkish as a foreign language reported that readers theater was effective in the development of their fluent reading skills. Accordingly, when the students were asked about the benefits of readers theater, they gave reasons for increasing reading speed, improving prosody, pronunciation and comprehension skills, and decreasing reading errors. In the literature, it is seen that experimental studies reveal that readers theater contributes positively to the development of fluent reading skills of students with different reading levels. For example, Kanık Uysal (2020) found that readers theater was effective in improving the fluent reading skills of fifth grade students. Similarly, Babacan (2020) found that readers theater had a positive effect on the fluent reading and reading comprehension skills of fourth grade students. Many studies conducted abroad also reveal that the readers theater method improves students' fluent reading skills, especially in the mother tongue teaching process (Carrick, 2000; Caudill-Hansen, 2009; Smith, 2011; Young & Rasinski, 2018; Suggs, 2019).

When the opinions received of the students are analyzed, it is noteworthy that some of the shortcomings of this method are emphasized. For example, the texts are long and difficult, not all students have the same level of motivation and readiness in the reading process, students who find group work boring are more willing to read individually, students with poor reading performance and students who do not take responsibility reduce motivation, and some students' anxiety during the animation process are emphasized as the negativities experienced in this process. Aktaş and Çankal (2019) also stated in their study that students were bored especially during the preparation phase before the enactment, had difficulty due to the long texts, and felt anxiety due to the incompatibility they experienced with their partners. It can be said that it is important for the teacher to create a positive classroom climate by assuming a guiding role in solving these problems.

CONCLUSION

In this study, it was determined that readers theater, one of the fluent reading strategies, had a positive effect on the reading comprehension skills and reading motivation of Turkish EFL learners. In addition, it was also determined that the students expressed positive opinions about this method. Therefore, it can be recommended to use readers theater in developing fluent reading skills in foreign language teaching.

In the experimental dimension of this study, the effect of the readers theater strategy on reading skills and motivation

was tested. In addition, comparative experimental studies can be conducted to determine whether other fluent reading strategies are also effective on reading comprehension, prosody and motivation.

In this study, Level B students who learn Turkish as a foreign language were selected as the study group. It is known that students make reading mistakes and have reading comprehension problems at the beginning level of the foreign language teaching process. Therefore, studies measuring the effectiveness of these strategies can also be conducted for A level Turkish learners. Experimental studies can be conducted to investigate the effect of readers theater on prosodic reading skills, reading or pronunciation anxiety, or foreign language learning attitude in teaching Turkish as a foreign language.

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