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"THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL CONTENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING ESPECIALLY ITS IMPORTANCE ON READING COMPREHENSION : THE ROLE OF SCHEMATA"

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to define the relationship between the cultural content of a text and reading comprehension through the review of related literature, on one hand, and to show how significant cultural background is in reading comprehension by studying on intermediate level high school students on the other.

Chapter One deals with the context and statement of the problem, purpose of the study and hypothesis.

Chapter Two consists of two parts, and focuses on the review of literature. The first part includes the relatianship of culture and language. The second part is about the relationship of culture and reading comprehension and it includes the effect of cultural background knowledge in reading comprehension on the basis of the schema theory.

Chapter Three presents the experimental study together with the methodology, results and discussion.

In the last chapter, several conclusions, and the implications reached at are stated. Appendixes and bibliography are also attached to the end of this chapter.

ÖZET

Bu tezin amacı bir taraftan ilgili görüş ve düşünceler sunarak bir metnin kültürel içeriği ve o parçayı anlama arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamak ve diğer yandan üniversite sınavına hazırlanan lise öğrencileri üzerinde araştırma yaparak sahip olunan kültürel bilginin okuduğunu anlama üzerinde ne derece etkili olduğunu göstermektir.

Birinci bölüm problemin içeriği ve ifadesini, çalışmanın amacını ve hipotezleri konu alır.

İkinci bölüm iki bölümü içerir ve bu bölümde ilgili görüş ve düşüncelerin bulunduğu konular sunulur. Birinci bölüm kültür ve dil arasındaki bağlamı içerir. İkinci bölümde kültür ve okuduğunu anlama üzerinde durulur ve schema (ön bilgi) teorisine dayanılarak sahip olunan kültürel bilginin okuduğunu anlamadaki etkisini içerir.

Üçüncü bölüm yapılan deneysel araştırmayı ,yöntem, sonuçlar ve tartışma ile birlikte ortaya koyar.

Son bölümde, ortaya çıkan bir takım sonuçlar ve çıkarılan anlamlar ifade edilir. Ayrıca bu bölüm sonuna ekler ve kaynakça bölümü de eklenmiştir.

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

Why learnes fail to understand a text has been a matter of question that many researchers and educators have focused on for the last hundred years. What could be the reasons lying behind this failure? What did people emphasize by the word "the knowledge of-the world", and what did they mean by saying "question of how people know what is going on in a text is a special case of the question of how people know what is going on in the world at all?" (Brown and Yule, 1983, p.244).

Language cannot be set apart from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Language is at the same time an outcome or a result of the culture and also a means by which other facets of the culture are shaped and communicated. A language doesn't exist in a vacuum. It is integrated into the culture of people and reflects the totality of beliefs and sentiments of the speech community. Therefore, any language being studied will include cultural elements belonging to the society in which it is used.

Children grow up in a social group and while they are growing up, they learn ways of doing things, ways of expressing themselves, ways of looking at things, what things they should value and what things they should think as worthless, what is expected from them and what they may expect from others. These attitudes, reactions, assumptions become part of their life without their being conscious of them. A language is learned and used within such a context, drawing from the

cultural content meanings and functions which must be assimilated by language learners if they are to control the language as navite speakers control it.

When students, who are in a country where there is a predominant culture, come across a different set of behaviors and different set of values this may come out as a shock, they may consider the speakers of the language they are learning as strange, bad-mannered. In every language even at the elementary stage of learning, features mentioned above would probably be a problem to handle for monolingual students. This can be observed in written texts, such as texkbooks, advertisements, literary materials. So these cultural elements are reflected in any text produced by the members of that society and therefore will be reflected in the texts used in a language classroom. Rivers (1968) tells of African students learning English who were shocked when they read a dialogue in which a person refused a drink which was offered for a second time. In many societies this would indicate that the visitor had not enjoyed the drink the first time, whereas in others such a refusal is corsidered polite behavior in a formal situation, or a natural response in an informal situation.

Language teacher's common goal is to develop an intuitive and mutual understanding among human beings who are trying to reach one other for meaningful communication. Up to date reading has been considered the most important of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) as a second or foreign language (Grabe, 1998; Grellet, 1981) and the researchers have focused on different aspects of reading process.

Contrary to beliefs defining reading as a process of deciphering the meaning brought to the text by the writer, Smith (1971) approached the issue from a psycholinguistic perspective and saw reading as an interaction between language and thought, which requires less reliance on visual information. Goodman (1967) has depicted reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game" by which the Readers/learners approach a text with expectations based on their knowledge of the language and of the subjects in addition to their past experience (Coady, 1979). According to Coady (1979) reading requires the interaction of three factors:conceptual abilities (basic intellectual ability) process strategies (familarity with the phonology, graphemes, and lexicon of a language), and background knowledge of the world, which means more than merely extracting the information from the text. Current approach to reading holds the view that reading is an interactive process, a successful cooperation of higher level and lower lever conceptual abilities (Carrell, 1988).

With the influence of two proponents of reading research, Goodman and Smith, more attention has been paid to the role of past experiences namely background knowledge that the reader brings to the text than that of morpheme-grapheme relationship (Samuels&Kamil, 1988; Parry, 1996). It has been hypothesized that readers are not successful in comprehending a text because of the fact that they bring different systems of background knowledge to the comprehension process (Steffensen, 1984; Carrell, 1988).

Carell (1983) distinguishes between two kinds of background knowledge of the rhetorical organization of a text, and background

knowledge of the content area of a text. Various studies indicate that the information that a text presents interacts with the reader's background knowledge and the background knowledge that the learner brings to a text is often culture specific.

According to Fries (1963), in reading a foreign language text, we extract three levels of meaning: lexical meaning, structural or grammatical meaning, and sociocultural meaning. For lexical or grammatical meaning students may turn to a dictionary or a grammar textbook. It is sociocultural meaning that is the most difficult for a second-language learner to perceive, for this involves the values, beliefs, and attitudes of speech community. These aspects can be considered as cultural knowledge and cannot be ignored in a model of reading. Reading is a complex skill and contains many different aspects and characteristics. It is not simply a decoding operation.

The effects of language complexity and culturally determined background of a text have always been recognised as elements of concern in the evaluation, selection and development of reading materials for foreign language learners. These elements also have an important effect on the evaluation of the learner's comprehension. Culturally determined background of a text seems to play an even more important role in the comprehension of a text. As the texts are never totally explicit, they must be completed by the reader. The reader tries to make sense of the text according to what he already knows of the subject. In order to achieve complete comprehension, the learner needs to posses the sociocultural knowledge of that language besides the linguistic knowledge. Cross-cultural experimentations carried out in the

field of English as a foreign language, (Abdur Rauf (1988), Alptekin and Alptekin (1983-84), Carrell (1983,84,87), Jaramillo (1973), Johnson (1981-82) have demonstrated this truth. If the reader doesn't posses the cultural backround assumed by the writer the meaning is distorted and the intended message cannot to be got since the reader is not able to reconstruct the text in his mind by sampling, testing or confirming. So there is an inconsistency between the written text and the reconstructed text in the reader's mind.

The schema theory (Aron, 1988) suggests that schema (background knowledge) is composed of different schemata which represent knowledge about all concepts, underlying objects, situations, events, actions, etc. It claims that efficient comprehension of a text requires the ability to relate textual material to one's own knowledge.

1.1. Context and Statement of the Problem

Recent research has been for loading textbooks wiht themes referring to target culture depending on the belief that providing learners wiht such a background might develop understanding of the target language. Coady, (1979:7) perceived the issue:

> Background knowledge becomes an important variable when we notice, as many have, that students with a Western background of some kind learn English faster, on the average, than those without such a background.

However, there are still people (Valdes, 1986; Alptekin, 1984) sharing the idea that foreign language learners will comprehend a text belonging to their culture better then those to target culture. So some

researchers devoted a great deal of effort to find evidence of how people perceive and interpret native and target culture content materials (Carrell, 1983; Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983; Steffensen & Joag-Dev, 1980; Johnson, 1981).

Johnson points out that "there is a growing amount of evidence that one very important factor affecting the reading comprehension of second-language learners is a lack of necessary cultural background knowledge" (Johnson, 1981:169-181).

In foreign language learning and teaching we assume that our students already know how to read, but we don't pay much attention to whether or not they adequately understand what they read. Readers acquire meaning from a text by analyzing the words and sentences against their own personal knowledge of the world. Such personal knowledge is contidioned by a variety of factors such as age, sex, race, nationality, occupation... which can be described as a person's culture. Most of us are unaware of the effects of culture on our communication with others.

Many written materials used in foreign language classrooms are culturally oriented, thus it is very difficult for target language students to arrive at the accurate meaning. This difficulty is related to a lack of cross-cultural understanding rather than a lack of linguistic competence.

Some scholars (Bradford, (1970); Brown,1986; Gebhard,1987) claim that making use of. English and American literature in an EFL classroom is the best way to illustrate the Western life style since it

includes the sociocultural relations among the people who speak that language and since it provides learners a genuine context.

However, when literature is employed at the first stages of acquiring the necessary skills for reading, there might occur some theoretical and practical complications. Especially the learner of English, either for academic purposes (EAP), or for specific purposes (ESP), might bring inappropriate attitudinal and judgemental expectations wiht him to the classroom. In such cases, language is better to be presented as free of cultural elements of the target language as possible. Thus, especially at early stages in order to assess language competence and familiarize readers with other cultures, text selections of foreign language curriculum shauld be based on concepts and contents which carry global references and represent real life domains that readers can easily grasp meaning as active participants and interpreters. Benson (1991:75-76) stresses that:

> If content presents certain challenges to the ESL students so too does the means by which it is conveyed, that is, the text type. Within EAP expository prose has been identified as the type most commonly required for university study. Consequenty it has attached attention from both first language and second language researchers. The conclusion have been that expository text which is tightly organised, is more facilitative for recall than a text which is loosely organised.

However, since in understanding what is going on in a text, we need to know about everyday experiences in the culture and have them shared by writer and reader, at later stages culture should not be ignored.

Teaching a foreign language posses a serious problem, especially in a country where cultural prejudices are great. For example an Israeli student of English, inculcated in beliefs of Palestinians being illiterate, wild, bad-mannered would tend to refuse to come terms with a reading passage that claimed Palestinians are not the way he has believed them to be. So in addition, the success of a second-language program depends on reducing the culture bondage of students and motivating them to understand the culture of the target language without seeming to sell them the culture of the target culture. Foreign language teachers must maintain complete neutrality.

However, when we review the related literature, it can be naticed that a very little research has been done on the reading processes and strategies used by readers who learn English as a foreign language (EFL) and a very little research has been done which shows the relationship between the culturally determined background of a text and reading comprehension.

Taking the schema theory into consideration the research question will be as follow:

"What is the relationship between cultural content of text and reading comprehension?"

1.2. Purpose of the Study

It is stated before that culture has been a neglected area in language teaching and learning for many years. One aim of this study is to define the nature of the relationship between culture and language.

Taking the schema theory into consideration, within the limits of the study it is aimed to investigate whether the cultural content of a text effects comprehension, if so, to what extent it does. If it is rephrased, it is aimed to measure whether familarity with the cultural content of a reading text influence reading comprehension.

1.3. Limitations

This study had its limitations. In this study, first of all, the context of the problem and hypothesis are presented. Next the relationship of culture and language is shown by reviewing of the related literature. In this section also the affect of cultural background knowledge on reading comprehension is stated on the basis of the schema theory. In the third part to show the importance of cultural knowledge, culture based texts with a set of reading comprehension questions are given to the intermediate-level subjects. Thus, in this part, knowledge about experimental study is given. The number of subjects participated in this study is limited. Thirty five students participated to this experiment. So a larger research can be done on this subjects to use more general statements. An other limitation is that all the subjects are from Konya Gazi High School and they are at the intermediate level.

There are some other limitations concerning the texts which are given to the subjects. Firstly the content of the texts is limited. One of the text is a native culture based text and the other text is a foreign culture based text which includes English culture. Also the topics of the texts are limited, since eventhough these texts have different cultural content, they have some similarity with respect to their subject matter. In

both texts, there is a handsome, helpful and hardworking boy, everybody likes him and he trys to earn money. The number and the kind of comprehension questions following the texts have been limited. There are nine comprehension questions for each texts and there will be three kinds of questions; factual, inferential and evaluative. The time given subjects to read text and answer comprehension questions was limited too. The subjects read the texts and answer the questions for each text in two lessons time. The subjects take the native culture based text in the first hour and they take foreign-culture based text in the second hour. In the descriptive analysis of the data mean scores and standart deviation, and in the comparative analysis independent t-test techniques are used. Also the time for preparation of this thesis is limited.

In the last chapter the conclusions and implications reached at are stated and the texts and comprehension questions used are presented.

1.4. Hypothesis

In this study, it is hypothesized that there exists a correlation between learners' background knowledge of the cultural content of a reading text and their comprehension of it.

For the purpose of the study thirty five students read two texts; a short story by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil (1934, see appendix A) and an extract from Bud Schulberg's 'What Makes Sammy Run? (1978, see appendix C). They answer some kind of comprehension questions (factual, inferential and evaluative questions).

In the light of this research it is hypothesized that the learners of English in this situation (EFL for EAP) and at this level (interemediate) are expected to have a better performance on the native culture based text since the information in the text matches the possessed schema of the learner. This effect will be seen especially on the inference and evaluation levels of comprehension. Thus they are unlikely to make correct inferences and evaluations on a foreign culture based text as much as they do on the native culture based text since they don't posses the relevant background knowledge.

CHAPTER 2

2. REVIEW OF BACKGROUND LITERATURE

2.1. Language And Culture

2.1.1. Culture

Culture may mean different things to different people. In the antropological sence culture is defined as the way people live. This definition encompasses the types of information that would seem to be of most interest and importance to the typical student enrolled in a language class. In addition this definition most nearly satisfies the requirements for the type of material needed to satisfy the stated goals of intercultural understanding. Ideally, at the end of their studies, the students will have a functional knowledge of the second-culture system just they have of the second language system. In stressing this **small-c culture** approach, the teacher should make clear to the students that each individual is a member of a subculture within a culture just as every individual in a language group speaks a dialect of a language (Chastain 1988:302).

Damen (1987) feels that teacher should emphasize that the student of a second culture should gain insights into his own culture, just as the student of a second language gains insights into his own language. In fact, at times the teacher may find it necessary to introduce a cultural topic by first, clarifying the student's own cultural behaviaor in a particular situation. Often comparing the two cultural systems can be beneficial to comprehension of one's own culture.

Another definition of culture facuses on the major products and contributions of a society in general or of outstanding individuals in that society. With this approach often referred to as **large-c culture**, the students study the economic, social, and political history and the great politicians, heroes, writers and artists of the country.

The stance taken here is that the anhtropological definition should be followed in beginning language classes. Students who take a language for several years and who wish to explore the society's contributions to world knowledge and civilization should be given the opportunity in advanced classes to probe large C culture in greater depth and breadth. Organized in this fashion, materials can be developed that are more in keeping with student's interest and linguistic and intellectual capabilities.

Listed below are some definitions of culture in relation to language. Kluckhohn broadens the difinition of culture and says that "culture is like a map... No participant in any culture knows all the details of the cultural map... Just as a map isn't the territory but an abstract representation of a particular area, so also a culture is an abstract description of trends toward uniformity in the words, deed and artifacts of a human group. If a map is accurate you can read it, you won't get lost; if you know a culture you will know your way around in the life of a society" (Kluckhohn 1944:24).

According to Hall, "culture is communication and communication is culture" (1959:169). In this definition the concepts of communication and culture are integrated, and implications are extended. Therefore, if communication is culture and vice versa, then human

beings cannot adequately communicate. Language and culture have influenced each other. A growing adequate comprehension of peoples' behavioral patterns and their underlying values clearly give a more positive attitude to the person who is trying to learn the target language. Furthermore, language meaning is abscured without some recognition of cultural values.

Definition of culture in recent researches has focused on culture as a system of ideas or organizations of cognitive knowledge. According to Goodenough, "a society's culture consists of whathever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members"(Goodenough 1964:36).

By such definition, it seems that culture is not a material phenomenon; it doesn't consist of things, people, behavior, or emotion; it is rather, an organization of these things. It is the form of things that people have in mind, their model for perceiving relating and otherwise interpreting them (Damen, 1987).

Frake, by considering the definition of Kluckhohn in the 1940s, claims that people are not only **map readers** but are also **map makers**. He states that "culture does not provide a cognitive map, but rather a set of principles for map making and navigation... Different cultures are like different schools of navigation designed to cope with terrains and seas" (Frake 1981:375-376). These definitions of culture emphazised the importance of human diversity and variations in patterns of behavior. The authors, who defined culture as above, stressed the insider's view and the role of culture in human perception.

All the definitions cited above give different definitions of culture. After reviewing all these definitions for the purpose of this thesis, culture is defined as the background knowledge about some-cultural aspects (attitudes, cumtoms, behavior, values, social relation, differences in age, amount of intimacy, social position, and emotional tension reflected in the choice of appropriate pronouns and verbs) of the language being learned.

2.1.2. Components and Categories of Culture

Beside definitions of culture, major areas of culture should be studied. Thus, components of culture must not be ignored. Edward T. Hall derives one hundred categories from ten primary message systems, which are; 1.Interaction, 2. Association, 3. Subsistence, 4. Bisexualitty, 5. Territoriality, 6. Temporality, 7. Learning, 8. Play, 9. Defense, and 10. Exploitation.

From these ten primary message systems, Hall has created an interrelated Map of Culture (Hall 1959:174-175). The order of the ten systems (in Figure 1) is supposed to represent theoretically the evolution of culture. Each primary title horizantally and vertically includes ten cultural components, totalling a hundred subtitles.

According to Damen, "the Hall grid provides a handy reference to consider major areas of cross-cultural variation, including such social categories as role, status, class and hierarchy, as well as the physical and psychological environment. Other varietions can be found in perception, patterns of thinking, relationships of individuals, functions of language,

and nonverbal communication[1] including uses of space, time, gestures and body movement" (Damen 1987:89-90).

Hall (1959) gives a brief explanation of these ten primary message systems as follows:

Interaction is a primary characteristic of all life, and ultimately everything man does involves interaction with something else.

Association is the basis for the structering of societies, it has its roots in the joining of individual units.

Subsistence deals with the nutritional requirements of man and the way in which these are met in a particular society.

Bisexuality is the "answer" most life forms adopted to meet the need of a mixed genetic background.

Territoriality and Temporality help man to define himself.

Learning is the deep and wide knowledge gained through reading written texts and study, and it is important as an adaptive mechanism.

Play deals with the activities of people for amusement and also includes humor.

Defense includes religion, war, law enforcement, medicine, etc.

Exploitation is the extension man makes of his body to utilize the environment (Hall 1959:46-60).

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[1] Nonverbal communication includes **paralanguage** (pitch, rate, intensity, and quality of speech), **kinesics** (individual movement and actions), and reactions to context and environment, including the use of space (proxemics) (Damen, 1987).

Categories of Culture

What should students learn about the second culture to be able to function in that culture? Around what basic topics should this information be organized?

Based on the antropological definition of culture Chastain (1988) shows the following list is one possible categorization of culture themes. Readers shouldn't hesitate to add other topics and subtopics with whic they are familiar and with whic the students should become acquainted. This list has been prepared from an antropological perspective, a values point of view, and from the students' point of view. Both similarities and differences between cultures should be included (Chastain 1988:304).

1. Family
2. Home
3. Meeting personal needs
4. Eating
5. Social interaction
6. Education
7. Leisure activities
8. Courtship and marriage
9. Money
10. Earning a living
11. Economic system
12. Politics
13. Contemporary scene
14. Religion
15. Vacations
16. Travel
17. Daily routines
18. Pets
19. The press
20. Holidays
21. Transportation
22. Language
23. Ecology
24. Population
25. Crime
26. Humor
27. Death
28. Clothing
29. Geography
30. Correspondence
31. Services (e.g., Medical, postal, banking, police)
32. Health and welfare
33. Commonly known history
34. Retirement
35. Good manners
36. Courtesy phrases
37. Nonverbal communication

Students should be familiar with what to say in certain regularly occuring situations. They should be prepared to respond, for example, when being introduced to someone, meeting a friend, ordering in a restaurant, asking for information, or receiving a compliment. In addition they should be acquainted with facial expressions, gestures, and tones of voice that are used in specific situations that carry important social and psychological implications.

2.1.3. Language and Culture

In the early 1950s linguists and antropologists developed a great interest in relation of language and culture and they came to recognise that they are two related phenomena.

The native language is learnad along with the ways and attitudes of a social group, and these find expression through the language. The psychologist Osgood set out a theory of language meaning. He states that full meaning of words for individuals is the result of the sum total of experiences they have had with those words in the environment in which they learned them. When individuals are from the same group, there will be no particular problem, as they have had similar experiences. The meaning of a word is shared by them all, but it may differ in certain respects from the meaning this word has for another group (cited by Rivers 1968:318).

Hall (1959 – in Nababan 1974) sees culture as "a complex message system by which the members of the community exchange messages". The sharing of one culture makes the members of the community capable of understanding one another, makes one know what

other members expect and what to do in order to make one's wishes, feelings and attidudes known to other members of the group. Therefore culture can be said to be the "medium of the flow of, information "as Nababan (1974) puts it." Not only among the contemporary members of the group but also between generations of the society".

Culture has been attached to language learning and teaching. The language teacher is supposed to be cultured person and the learner is supposed to enhance his own culture as he learns a second language. According to Chastain (1988) in the ideal language class the teaching of culture is an integral, organized component of the course content. Fundamental aspects of the culture are incorporated into the ongoing class activities and included in the tests over the material covered. The students anticipate that they will "learn a people" as well as a language (Chastain 1988:298).

Nababan (1974:4) indicated that:

> One of the most obvious relations of language to culture is that of part to whole. Language qualifies as an element or subsystem of culture in all the definitions and aspects of culture; it is the central part of it and is involued in particularly all the other parts of the culture.

After stating the relation of language to culture, Nababan concludes that "the foreign language teachers should know enough about the foreign culture, including kinesics and paralanguage to give their students an adequate ability in cross-cultural communication, i.e. understanding and using the foreign language properly" (12).

Cultural ideas also play a vital role beside other components of meaning (e.g. semantic meaning linguistic ideas and personal ideas) to

make the communication sensible (Bever 1972:101). Cultural ideas represent the meaning of a concept with reference to its user, context and situation. " 'She is mourning' conveys the notion of wearing black to an Italian, but wearing white to a Korean" (Rivers 1968:319). The semantic meaning of both is the visible expression of sadness at the death of some person. The cultural ideas of black or white as appropriate for mourning does not affect the essential semantic meaning of "mourning", although lack of knowledge of the cultural idea implied by the statement may result in inappropriate behavior and miscomprehension, as for a Turk, ('She is not mourning! She's wearing white!').

By analyzing the components of meaning, Rivers states that "students acquiring another language must learn how to express the semantic meaning (through acquisition of vocabulary, idioms, verb forms, articles, and so on); they must learn the connotative meaning of these expressions as used in the new culture (the evaluative and reactive aspects of meaning) along with the special linguistic devices employed within culture for the expression of these meanings" (Rivers, 1968:320-322).

Whether it is realized or not, conveying impression of another culture cannot be avoided. Rivers states that "language cannot be separated completely from the culture in which it is deeply embedded, and any listening to the utterances of native speakers, any attempt at authentic use of the language to convey the messages, any reading of original text, any examination of pictures of native speakers engaged in natural activities will introduce a cultural element (Rivers, 1968:320).

Primary Message Systems	Interactional	Organizational	Economic	Sexual	Territorial	Temporal	Instructional	Play	Defense	Exploitational
Interaction 0	Communication Vocel qualifiers Kinesics Language	Status and Role	Exchange	How the sexes interact	Places of interaction	Times of interaction	Teaching and learning	Participation in the arts and sports (active and passive)	Protecting and being protected	Use telephohes signers, writing, etc.
Association 1	Community	Society Class Caste Government	Economic roles	Sexual roles	Local group roles	Age groups roles	Teachers and learners	Entertainers and athletes	Protectors (doctors, clergy, soldires, poilec, etc.)	Use of group property
Subsistence 2	Ecological community	Occupational groupings	Work Formal work Maintenance Occupations	Sexual division of labor	Where the individual eats, cooks, etc.	When the individual eats, cooks, etc.	Learning from working	Pleasure from working	Care of health protection of livelihood	Use of foods, reseurres, and equipment
Bisexuality 3	Sex Community (clans, etc.)	Marriage groupings	Family	The sexes Masc. Vs. Fem. Sex.biological Sex. Technical)	Areas assigned to individuals by wrtue of sex	Periods assigned individuals by virtue of sex	Teaching and learning sex roles	Participation iun recreation by sex	Protection of sex and fertility	Use of sex-differentiating decoration and adornment
Territorilaty 4	Community teritory	Group territory	Economic areas	Men's and womens territories	Space formal space informal space Boundaries	Scheduling of space	Teaching and learning individual space assignments	Fun, playing games, etc. In terms of space	Privacy	Use of fences and markers
Temporality 5	Community cycles	Group cycles	Economic cycles	Men's and women's cyctical activities	Territorially determined cycles	Time Sequence Cycles Calender	When the individual learns	When the individual plays	Rest, vacations, holidays	Use of timetelling devices etc.
Learning 6	Community lore what gets taught and learned	Learning groups educational institutions	Reward for teaching and learning	What the sexes are taught	Places for learning	Scheduling of learning (group)	Enculturation Rearing informal learning Education	Making learning fun	Learning self defense and to stay healthy	Use of recteational materials (playhings)
Play 7	Community play the arts and sports	Play groups teams and troupes	Professional sports and entertainment	Men's and women's play, games	Recreational areas	Play seasons	İntructional play	Recreational Fun Playing Games	Exercise	Use of materials for protection
Defense 8	Community defenses structured defense systems	Defense groups armies, police, public heatlth, organized religion	Economic patterns of defense	What the sexes defend (home, honor, etc.)	What places are defended	The when of defense	Scientific religious, and military training	Mass exercises and military games	Protection Formal defenses informal defenses Technical defenses	Use of materials for protection
Exploitation	Communication networks	Organizational networks (cities, building groups, etc.)	Food, resources, and industrial equipment	What men and women are concerned with and own	Property-what is enclosed counted and measured	What peridos are measured and recorded	School building training aids, etc.	Amusement and sporting goods and their industries	Fortifications armaments, medical equipment satetv devices	Material Systems Contect w//environment Motor habits Technology

Figure 1 : A Map of Culture
(Hall 1959: 174-175)

Buttjes (1982) identifies three basic positions. The first, "pragmatic-communicative oriented", means teaching about culture which is intended to alleviate problems of communication in the target language. The second approach is to give learners a critical understanding of a foreign people, of their own view of themselves and their valves. This called "ideological-understanding oriented". The third one is called "political-action oriented". This suggests the developing of critical understanding, encourages learners to accept particular historical developments and presents social situations as definite and fixed, to respond critically, analytically, and, as a consequence, to analyze their own social environment with critical understanding. Buttjes then claims that "culture learning is actually a key factor in being able to use and master a foreign linguistic system, and it is a part of language learning and teaching" (Byram 1989:60).

Language and culture are inseparable; it is better to see the special characteristic of language as cultural items and to recognize that language enters into the learning and use of nearly all other cultural elements. The view that language is the keystone of in the structure of a culture is stated by Sapir as follow;

> Language is an essentially perfect means of expression and communication among every known people. Of, all aspects of culture, it is a fair guess that its essential perfection is prerequisite to the development of culture as a whole (Sapir 1970:1).

2.1.4. The Importance of Stressing Culture in Language Classes and The Attitude of Teacher

Why is the culture component so crucial in language learning? According to Chastain (1988), first, language and culture are inseparably bound; therefore, complete comprehension during any type of intercultural communication depends upon the participants' awareness of the social and cultural significance of the words and expressions employed. Language is used to convey meaning, but meaning is determined by the culture (Chastain 1988:298). Damen (1987) notes that to be meaninful language must be culture specific. For example eating is an action common to all people, but what, when, where, how, and with whom vary from culture to culture thereby giving this universal activity a culturally specific character. In the same sense communicative competence is a language concept common to all languages, and speakers of all languages are more or less familiar with the rules governing when to say what with whom in which situations. However, the particular patterns of social interaction are specific to each culture (Chastain 1988-298). Learning to understand a foreign culture should help an individual who learns another language (culture which she is trying to understand) to use words and expressions more skillfully and authentically; to understand levels of language and situationally appropriate language; to act naturally with people of the other culture while recognizing and accepting their different reactions.

Another fundamental reason for the inclusion of culture is intercultural understanding itself. International understanding is one of

the basic goals of education in the modern interdependent world community of nations. Too understanding cultural differences among the various subcultures within a pluralistic society is equally important. Whether or not it is successful depends on the degree to which language teachers give their students information about the basic similarities and differences between their culture and that of the language they are studying. Because intercultural understanding is emphasized in education and society, the culture goal is a major asset in justifying language study in the schools.

The third principal reason for stressing culture in language classes has to do with the students. On one hand they are extremely interested in the people who speak the language they are studying. They want to know about them-what they are like and how they live. On the other hand, they know very little about the basic aspects of their own culture, and certainly most of them are too young to have had the experiences necessary to gain more than a superficial knowledge about cultures of other countries or even of the subcultures within their own society (Chastain 1988:299).

Anthropologists agree that individual behavior in any culture lies within the limits of an overall system of learned patterns. In this sense, the study of culture is comparable to the study of language. The basic components of the system need to be identified and presented to the students in a comprehensible manner. Culture is so complex that students cannot be expected to absorb the totality of native cultural habits, but they should become familiar with those aspects that are most important inderstanding the people and their way of life. The extent to which

students wish to familarize themselves with the second culture depends a great deal on the students. At very least, students schoul be given the insights that will enable them to acquire the necessary cultural knowledge to participate in the second-culture setting.

According to Damen (1987) learning culture is as universal and natural as learning language. A functional knowledge of both is necessary to interact and communicate with other people in one's cultural environment. In language classes in which intercultural understanding is one of the goals, students become more aware of their own culture and more knowledgeable about the second-language culture. They learn to recognize cultural patterns of behavior and communication and to function within the parameters of those new expectations. They learn to recognize cultural patterns of behaviour and communication within the parameters of expectations. They learn that **culture shock** is a normal reaction, and they anticipate ways to deal with new and uncomfortable situations. The hope is that they will develop a greater tolerance for those whose values, attitudes, and beliefs are different from theirs and that they will learn to manage change and growth successfully (Chastain 1988:299).

The attitude of the teacher is a crucial factor in determining the extent to which cultural objectives are attained. If she expects all the students to love the second culture as much as she does, she is certain to be disappointed. If she attempts to indoctrinate the student swith attitudes from the second culture she will most likely be rejected by the majority of her students. If she attempts to criticize the students own culture, she may arouse negative, counter productive feelings. In short

the teacher should not insist that the students emulate her own affinity for and commitment to the second culture, as much as she may be predisposed to do so. The teacher's task is to make students aware of cultural differences, not pass value judgements on those differences. She is to acquaint, not indoctrinate (Chastain 1988:301).

Chastain points out that this should not be interpreted to mean that the teacher should not be enthusiastic about second cultures. Without enthusiasm, any course becomes dry and unpalatable for both teacher and students. However, the enthusiasm should always moderate by the realities of the students' situation. They are young, inexperienced, and struggling to develop a self-identity within their own culture. The teacher's enthusiasm should not reach a level at which the students feel culturally threatened, a point at which they are forced to reject all or many aspects of the second culture to protect their image of the first. The study of culture should be a broadening experience, not one of rejection. The students should be made to feel that studying the second culture does not in any way imply the abandonment of their own.

Damen (1987:214) emphasizes this point by saying, "To understand another set of rules for living does not necessarily mean that old patterns are wrong and to be rejected. To do so may mean a loss of cultural identity and regulation to the permanent status of marginal stanger everywhere." The point is that the teacher should be sensitive to students' feelings and be prepared to take steps to ameliorate any negative reactions. Given the appropriate cultural information they will acquire a certain degree of comprehension of the people and their culture. Such knowledge should develop in them a higher degree of

sensitivity to and tolerance for cultural differences than they had prior to language study. As they grow and mature, they can incorporate those behavioral patterns and values that they seem desirable into their own lives.

2.1.5. The Whorfian Hypothesis

In present days the relationship between diversity in languages, and human diversity of thought and culture recognized as of interest particularly to anthropology and linguistics, because it relates linguistic forms to culture. In the nineteenth century the German linguist Von Humbolt suggested different ways in which a language categorizes, imposing on the mind ways of organizing our knowledge; the diversity of languages, therefore, is not one of the sounds and signs but a diversity of world perspective (Stern 1983:204)

Edward Sapir, suggested that speech is a "non-instinctive, acquired, cultural function", and makes a comparison between speech and walking (organic and instinctive). He compared the functions which human beings acquired, considering instinctiveness and non-instinctiveness. At the end he accepted that there is a close relationship between language and thought, and stated that:

> Culture may be defined as what a society does and thinks. Language is a particular how of thought. It is difficult to see what particular relations may be expected to subsist between a selected inventory of experience (culture, a significant selection made by society) and the particular manner in which the society expresses all experience (Sapir 1921:218)

The writings of Whorf, were particularly influential in keeping the lines open to a wider conception of language in relation to culture, society, and individual. The studies for finding out the relationship between linguistics and anthropology (and psychology) were those which were associated with Whorf's name, sometimes reffered to within principle of linguistic relativity, the Whorfian (or Sapir-Whorf) hypothesis, or the linguistic "Weltanschauung" (world view) problem (Stern 1987:203). World-view problem includes sets of culturally shared realities. These realities are the culturally constructed world perception, meaning and practice that members of any culture take to be absolitely correct and genuine. World view consists of attitudes, beliefs and assumptions about the environment, human relations, social organization, and all that constitutes human life. Language learners are only too well aware of the fact that certain aspects of a new language... items of vocabulary, or grammatical features... often imply concepts for which the native language has no equivalent. One language may have seperate vocabulary items for concepts which are left undifferentiated in another language. A famous illustration of this fact, given by Boas, and later impressively illustrated by Whorf in a drawing in one of his papers, was that the Eskimo language has various expressions for the one English word **"snow:** snow on ground (apout); falling snow (quona); drifting snow (piqsirpog); or snow drift (quiumpsug)" (cited by Stern 1983:204)

Whorf was deeply impressed with the power of language over man's mind, and attempted to make a theoretical statement concerning the cultural implications of linguistic differences. Whorfian hypothesis

states that "a casual arrow can be drawn from language categories and forms to cultural items and meanings, which in turn add up to a unique world view or system of cultural meanings" (Whorf 1956: 214)

Over the last two or three decades several investigators have tested the Whorfian hypothesis, which conflicting results... in studying different aspects of language in relation to extra-linguistic factors in different cultures, such as kinship terms, color terms, number words, disease terminologies, human relations or modes of address. The consensus on this problem that language develops in a social community. A product of social usage, a treatment of language in the view of cultural differences, is well expressed in the following three statements;

> **1.** Language primarily reflects rather than creates sociocultural regularities in values and orientation.
>
> **2.** Languages throughout the world share a far langer of structural universals than has herefore been recognized (Fishman 1972:155)
>
> **3.** If we can put aside the issue of what first causes what, or think which one is prior, language or societal behavior, we are left with the fascinating process of ongoing and intertwined conversation and interaction. In these processes language and societal behavior are equal partners, rather than one or the other of them being boss and giving orders to the other (Stern 1983:206).

Analysis of the above results has led to the widespread belief that a language learner should not only study the cultural context, language and culture, but that she should also be aware of the interaction between language and culture; language in culture, culture in language. It can be

said that there is a close relationship between social structure and language.

The theorists have been sufficiently imbued with Sapir's and Whorf's ideas to acknowledge the closeness of language and culture. In 1960 an American comittee on language and culture expressed the relationship which it regarded as essentral in three statements. '(1) Language is a part of culture, and must be approached with the same attitudes that govern our approach to culture as a whole. (2) Language conveys culture, so that the language tecaher is also of necessity a teacher of a culture. (3) Language is itself subject to culturally conditioned attitudes and beliefs which cannot be ignored in the language classroom' (Bishop 1960:29) Seelye (1974) regards it as an important objective for the learner to understand the interaction between language and social variables, and to be able to appreciate the cultural connotations of phrases (cited by Stern 1983:251)

Malinowski represented in Britain an anthropological school of thought in which language played a much more significant role. He believed that understanding of the language was impossible without constantly relating it to the culture in which it was operative. Using as an illustration an utterance of a native in the Trobriand Islands who was talking about a canoe trip and superiority of his canoe, Malinowski observed that such an utterance is totally incomprehensible, unless it is placed into its cultural setting and related to the circumstances in which it occurs. Following this observation Malinowski stated that:

> Language is essentially rooted in the reality of the culture, the tribal life and customs of the people and it can not be explained without constant reference to these broader contexts of verbal utterance. The study of any language spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and involving a different culture must be carried out in conjunction with a study of their culture and of their environment (Malinowski 1923:305).

2.1.6. Intercultural Communication

When individuals communicate through language, understanding of what is happening relates to the similar interpretation of the words and concepts they use. Misunderstanding often results from the use of the word that can convey more than one concept. Intercultural communication deals with this kind of problem which individuals often come up against. Porter and Samovar states that this process occurs when a message producer is a member of one culture and the message receiver is a member of another (Porter and Samovar 1982)

Intercultural communication can be defined as acts of communication undertaken by individuals identified with groups exhibiting intergroup variations in shared social and cultural patterns. These shared patterns, individually expressed, are the major variables in the purpose, the manner, the way of acting, behaving, speaking, living, and the means by which the communicative process is effected.

A basic assumption reflected by most writers on the subject is that instances of intercultural communication are more likely to result in miscommunication than in meaningful communication. Porter and

Samovar state that intercultural communication can entail "error in social perception brought about by cultural variations that effect the perceptual process" (Porter and Samovar 1982:42). Thus, the perception or interpretation of the communicative act by any and all of those involved is essential. Communication may indeed be taking place, but unless it is perceived correctly, problems will arise, and the communication chain will be broken.

For example, an English-speaking American teacher was addressed as "Miss" by a student whose native language was Dutch. The teacher reacted coldly because she perceived the use of the term "Miss" with no surname as an inappropriate address, usually, reserved for waitresses or clerks with whom impersonal terms could be used. Why this student used this term for teacher is not a a difficult question to understand for a person who is acquainted with both Dutch and American culture. He translated the tranditional Dutch term for a femala teacher, "Juffrouw," to the English "Miss." The student was very confounded by the teacher's disapproval (Damen 1987:23).

The field of intercultural communication is supported by various academic disciplines; Figure 2 represents a schematic view of the relationships of theory and practice in the field of discipline known as intercultural communication. This field includes cross-cultural practice, theory and research. The two-way arrows indicate that the flow of information and knowledge moves both horizontally and vertically, within and outside the "field" of intercultural communication and between individuals and groups. Thus theoretical contributions may be

drawn from outside the field of intercultural communication into the practice of second-language teaching and learning.

Although field specific theory is developing in intercultural communication, the main theoretical support continues to come from sister disciplines. In which manner cultural differences influence communication is closely connected with anthropology and other social sciences, such as sociology, linguistics, psyhology, and communication.

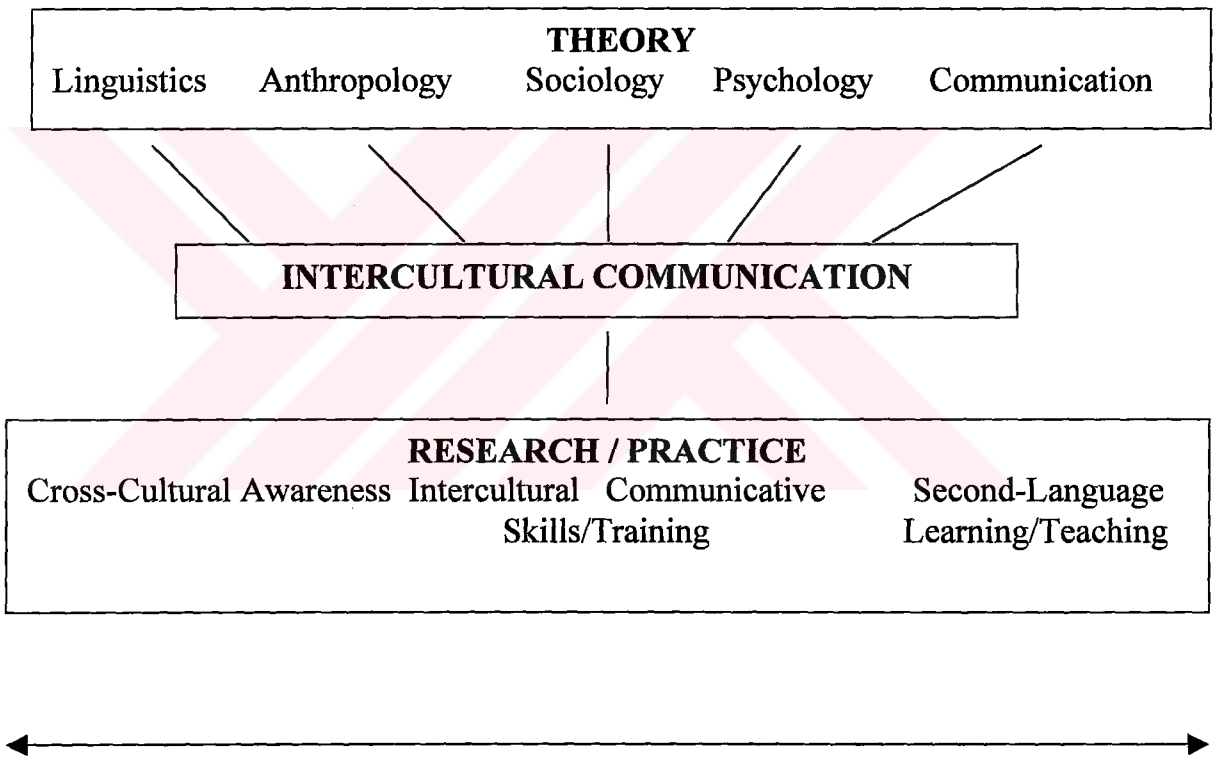


Figure 2 Theory and Research/Practice in International Communication (Damen 1987:92)

Communication

Developments in the field of intercultural communication came most directly from those in communication who were first asked to handle the problems in a scholarly way, the problems of understanding

those who sought to communicate. Writers such as Hoopes (1979), and Harris and Moran (1979), who were interested in the field insisted that communication involved perception, a physical and social context interaction, and feedback, but, above all, cross-cultural variations.

The scholars who were first interested in the field of intercultural communication, were communication professionals. They brought some basic assumptions about the nature of communicating. Gudykunst and Kim (1984) listed several such widely accepted assumptions. They state that "communication is assumed to be symbolic, processional, transactional, attributional, and sometimes nonintentional. It involves the coding and decoding of messages in different times and places, and at varying levels of awareness" (Gudykunst and Kim 1984:6-10).

Porter and Samovar state that "communication is an intricate form of interaction, social acts that occur in a complex social environment... The social environment is culture, and if we truly are to understand communication we also must understand culture" (Porter and Samovar 1982:31).

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

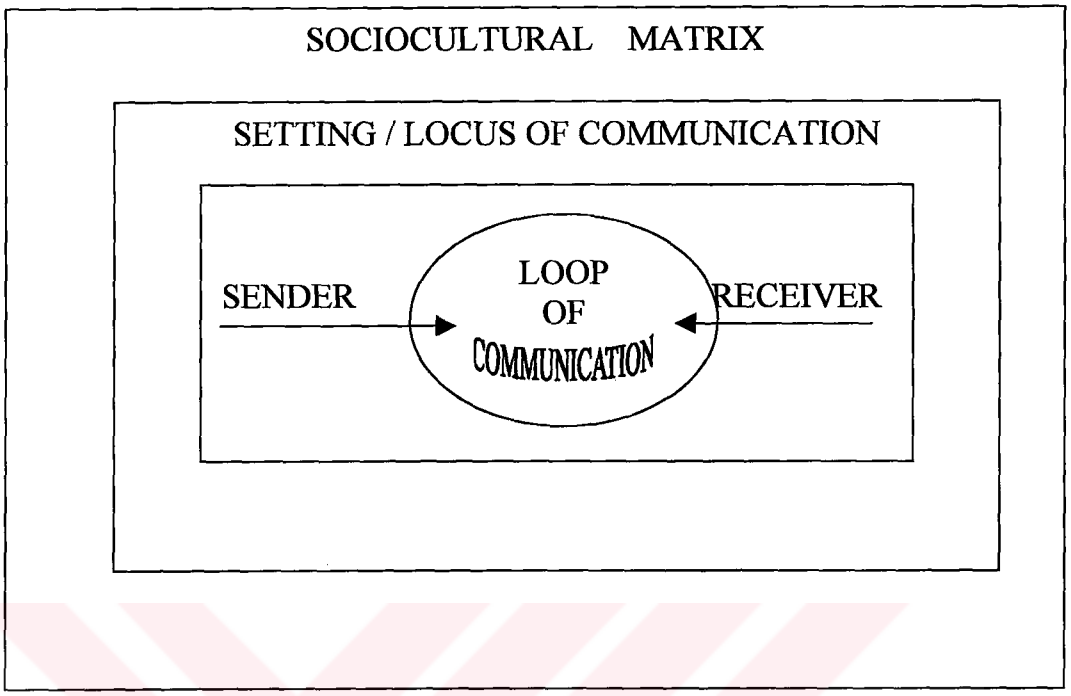


Figure 3 :Culture and Communication (Damen 1987:27)

Figure 3 from Damen (1987), shows that a communicative act takes place within the context of a sociocultural matrix whose boundaries are drawn by the identification of a number of individuals as sharing given cultural assumptions, behaviors, patterns. The setting, which operates within the general matrix, provides the locus of communication; it is also culturally conditioned, in terms of the uses of communication, manner of speech, or styles of communication. The communicative act itself is restled within this setting and takes place in a circular manner so that sender and receiver roles can be assigned interchangeably.

While filtering concepts and perceptions from many disciplines which relates to communication, intercultural communication has provided its own unique perspectives. **In practice**, these perspectives

have been applied to research into cross-cultural differences and similarities in perception, communication styles, socialization, evaluation, cognitiOn, culture change, and many other sociocultural phenomena. In addition, problems of prejudice, acculturation, culture shock and second-language learning, viewed from an intercultural aspects have taken on new dimension (Damen 1987).

In practice, the main problem is, while devoloping cross-cultural awareness (as the first step in cross-cultural understanding and communication), to focus on study and training. The communicative act itself including all its many individual, and the meaning of cultural aspects is now recognized as a major analytical unit. In practice this has meant that success or failure to communicate rests to a great extent upon the combination of personal, social, and cultural characteristics each participant brings to the communicative act.

Consideration of the relationships indicated in figure 2 should sensitize the reader to the fact that there are many theoretical foundations of research and practice in intercultural communication.

2.1.7. Cultural Competence and Communicating in Context

In a text words and structures don't solely give the exact meaning on their own. There are different kinds of knowledge to be drawn from sources other than the text itself, which readers make use of. To make sense of a text, it is essential for a person to be able to interpret how language is used in an everyday situation. The reader also needs knowledge not just of what things are, but also why people behave in certain ways or respond in certain ways to the behavior of others. Irving

points out that "culture and communication cannot be seperated from each other, and good communication skills depend on becoming familiar with the cultural context to which a language naturally belongs" (Irving 1986:239). The author also seeks to help students bridge the gap between linguistic and cultural competence that often exists for students who have already spent some time (in some cases years) studying the English language by focusing on its linguistic features rather than its cultural features. In reading texts, as in real life, we expect peoples' responses or reactions to be relevant to what has gone before, that is, appropriate to the situation. The following extract was taken from the first page of a novel by Wallace. The novel is about the daily life of Asian communities in the West Indies. If this extnact is considered, it can be found that the basic situation is familiar, indeed universal childbirth. Bapti has gone back to the home of her mother Bissoondaye for the birth of her child:

> "What is it?" the old man asked, "Boy or girl?" "Boy boy," the midwife cried. But what sort of boy? Six fingered, and born the wrong way. The old man graaned and Bissoondaye said, "I knew it. There is no luck for me".
>
> At once, though it was night and the way was lonely, she left the hut and walked to the next village, where there was a hedge of cactus. She brought back leaves of cactus, cut them into strips ... (Wallace 1988:24).

The meaning in this extract may be understood by a Western reader. But is it clear for a Turk to understand why Bissoondaye suddenly decides to go off to the next village fetch cactus leaves? What has that got to do with the birth of the baby? Is it anything to do with the baby's deformity? Probably not. The Turkish reader needs more

information about cultural aspects of the setting: for example, in which manner cactus leaves are important when a person gets a new baby.

Our cultural competence consists of an extremely complicated set of belief knowledge, feelings, attitudes and behavior. Irving defines the term of cultural competence as "the ability to understand cultures ... one's own and others... by means of objective, non-judgemental comparions. It is an appreciation for, an understanding of cultural pluralism-the ability to get rid of our ethnocentric tendencies and to accept another culture on its own terms. Many cross-cultural interactions go sour due to a lack of such a competence" (Irving, 1986:31).

Different cultural groups have different expectations about both behavior and events in such situations when they read a text. In interpreting what people do or say in texts we need to see their behavior in the context of what is considered commonplace or unremarkable. We need to know not just what counts as conventional or acceptable behavior, but what are conventional attitudes to bepavior. Wallace states that a knowledge of facts about in the real of facts about language use in the real world is needed for good reading. This sort of knowledge of verbal and non-verbal behavior has been called a knowledge of pragmatics or facts about real life "(Wallace 1988:35). Many of these so-called facts about everyday life are culture specific. They have to do with social norms what roles people may assume in certain situations, what they may say in such roles and what interpretation is made of what is said. Access to that kind of culturally determined meaning is perhaps the most inaccessible for a learner from another culture. What can be interpreted by a reader or what is supposed by a writer is related to these

norms. Sometimes for a reader, a difficulty arises in considering why the writer of a text states something irrelevant what the reader expects. It is completely related to these facts and thus to the reader's cultural competence. The answer to why certain responses follow certain questions can be found by considering the following extract;

> "Please" said the lady, "Have you a light"
> "Pardon" said the man
> "A light" she said.
> The man looked at her.
> "How old are you", he said (Wallace 1988:35).

The appropriateness of the man's questions or responses to the lady's request for a light and why the man asks these questions might be a question in itself. We need to know what the conventional views about smoking are, which other behavior and views about behavior are culture dependent. For example in Turkish society, young people do not smoke when they are with their elders and also women do not smoke in the streets. This differs in another society.

Cultural competence is crucial when consructing a meaning from a text. Readers bring their real-life experiences to any particular reading experience. A difficulty may arise where there is an insufficient correspondence between the sorts of knowledge, expectations and purpose which the reader brings to the text, and the kinds of knowledge, expectation, and purpose assumed by the writer. This is likely to be case where a reader and writer come together from different cultural or sub-cultural groups.

In a text, words don't solely give the exact meaning on their own. Readers bring meaning with them to texts. Carrel (1930a) points

out that the text itself does not carry meaning. A text only provide guidance for listeners and readers as to how they should construct the intended meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge. In absence of relevant background knowledge or for lack of using the context, any meaning may fail to be constructed. Here is an illustration.

> Zeno of Elea, a fifth century B.C. Greek, was the first to wonder how a specific interval could consist of smaller intervals that could be subdivided endlessly.
>
> (Boslough 1990:55).

Although dictionary definition of each word here could be given, and sentence structure could be identified easily by some people, many others, coming to it without introduction or preparation, could not make sense of it. It can be understood, on one level, but cannot be interpreted, for a simple reason: one may not clearly understand what it is about. To be able to understand a text (in other words to **communicate in context),** we must know the **source** of the text (from a book, newspaper, and so forth) what **genre** it is (folk tale, article, advertisement, report, and so forth), what the subject matter or **topic** is .... and more.

Second language learners of linguistic and cultural minority groups often have a further difficulty in drawing on their stock of knowledge as they try to make sense of, the content of text in a target language, if they aren't competent with the above-mentioned categories. There may be inappropriate understanding between what the reader interprets from the text and supposed cultural competence on a number of levels. Firstly, second-language readers may not know about certain kinds of culture- specific behavior. This was the case with the following

part of a story written for teenagers with some reading difficulty. In the story, Linda insists on going on holiday, but her dad refuses to give her any money:

> "In that case," said Linda, "I'll hitchhike"
> "Hitchhike?" said her Mum.
> "You're not hitchhiking," said her Dad.
> (Wallace 1988:32)

Hitchhiking a culture-specific phenomenan. In some countries, hitchhiking is considered as a bad behaviour, and parents do not let their children hitchhike. For the readers who don't know this term, a lenghty explanation is required, because it is necessary for adequate understanding here.

In this chapter, culture, its relation to language, culture in the context of language and the importance of cultural competence have been explained. In order to communicate in context in reading comprehension texts culture plays a vital role. Because reading in general has purposes such as getting information, learning a second language, having fun. While doing so, the readers try to master cultural aspects, so skills of efficient reading must be gained. In the next part reading comprehension and the importance of cultural content schemata in reading comprehension will be discussed.

2.2. Reading Comprehension And Culture

2.2.1. Definition of Reading

As it is true for the other three language skills, reading is a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related

language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. According to Coady reading involves a three fold relationship between the author and the text, between the reader and the text, and between the text and the culture. Whoever ideas the writer intend to bring to the text, it seems that it is the reader who is the most responsible in processing of the text (Coady, 1979).

Researchers find it difficult to give a single definition of reading. According to Goodman, reading is a "psycholinguistic process in that it starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning wihch the reader interprets and constructs." There is thus an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and reader decodes language to thought (Goodman 1973b:163).

According to Nutall (1982), reading does not only require active participation of the reader but it is an interactive one because the reader makes sense of the text by reconstructing the assumtions on which the text is based. She compares reading to a process of making one's own furniture using a do-it-yourself kit. If a person has the knowledge about carpentery, she will fit the pieces each other with least difficulty.

Widdowson defines reading as "an interaction between writer and reader, which cannot be had without an insight into the culture of the target language." Readers need a sympathetic orientation towards the culture of the target language in order to be effective in what they read. An ethnocentric attitude towards the target culture often retards a student's reading comprehension (Widdowson 1979:171).

An impressive definition of reading relates to the cultural aspect of reading. If reading means making a meaning out of a written or spoken text, it is Fries (1945) who incorporated culture into the definition of meaning. He talked abaut three levels of meaning: lexical, grammatical and sociocultural. It is then any sentence is meaningful to the extent the linguistic meaning of it fits into the social framework of organized information. McCormick (1995) adds sociocultural phenonenon to the definition of reading. The following quote illustrates how McCormick perceives reading:

> Reading is never just an individual, subjective experience. While it may be usefully described as a cognitive activity, reading, like every act of cognition, always occurs in social contexts (p.69).

Although some people states that reading is only a matter of phonic (the study of relationships between sounds and their spellings), Bardawi states that there is far more to reading than that. She defines reading as "both a process and a product" (Badrawi 1992:16). According to Badrawi reading is more than just receiving meaning in literal sense. It involves bringing an individual's entire life experience and thinking powers to try to understand what the writer has encodes. Therefore prior sensory experiences have a vital role in comprehending what is read.

From these discussions we can understand that reading is a receptive skill in that the reader is receiving a message from a writer. Reading requires that the reader focus attention on the reading materials and integrate previously acquired knowledge and skills to comprehend what someone else has written. Reading is a basic and complementary skill in language learning. Second language students need to learn to read

for communication and to read greater quantities of authentic materials. According to Chastain students can probably learn to read more easily than they can acquire any other skill, and they can use reading materials as a primary source of comprehensible input as they learn the language (Chastain 1988:216).

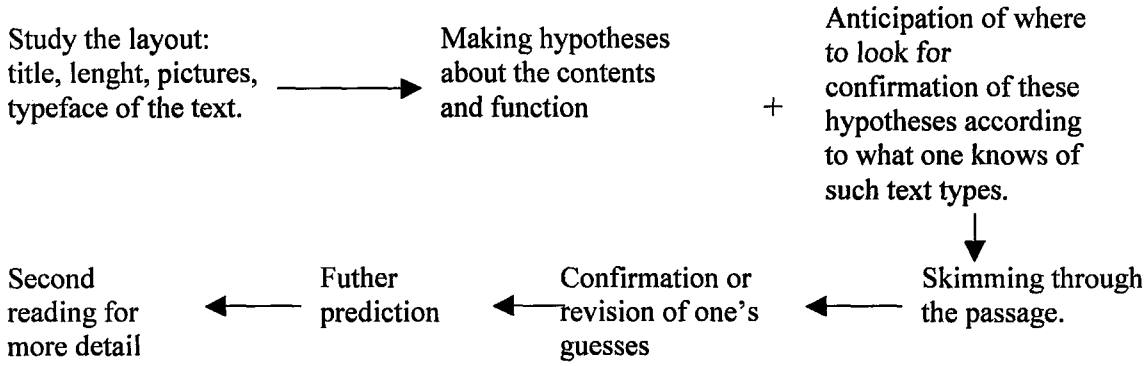
2.2.2. Reading Comprehension

The teaching of reading has gone through a process of evaluation ever since English started to be thought as a second language. Before reading has seen as an active skill, reading texts were produced for written reinforcement of oral instruction. They were intended to improve or reinforce grammatical patterns and vocabulary in the audiolingual classroom. In the fifties and sixties the increasing number of foreign students who came to study in the United States needed training in study skills, one of which was reading. It was then realised that a great gap existed between the so-called 'oral approach' and the needs of these students. Scholars began to approach reading as a linguistic problem, a problem of syntax, upon this realisation. Unsimplified texts were produced for these students to introduce them to the kind of texts to be found in their textbooks.

In the sixties and seventies reading gained a psyholinguistic perspective. From this perspective reading is viewed as a complex information processing skill. Although reading is thought to be a passive skill, the people realising the psychological insight considered the reader engeged in a very active skill while reading. This was because the reader planned make decisions, and coordinated a number of skills and

strategies to archieve comprehension. Kolers (1969-in Silberstein, 1937:30) demonstrated that "reading is incidentally visual. In reality more information is contributed by the reader than the print on the page. It is a process of thought and interaction between the text and the reader". It was then the reading texts began to be followed by exercies requiring skimming and scanning.

As mentioned previously Goodman (1971-cited in Coady, 1969:5) defines reading a psycholinguistic guessing game in which reader reconstructs a message encoded by a writer as a graphic display. This process of reconstruction happens in a cyclical manner involving four stages: sampling, predicting, testing and confirming. Based on this view, the reader makes predictions of the coming information present in the text, then samples the text either to confirm or to refute. Sharing the same view with him, Smith (1979) points out that reading comprehension depends upon prediction, adding that it is a complex process of brain (Smith 1979:102). Grellet (1981) having similar views with the scholars above offers a global approach to achieve this process of "constant guessing":



(Grellet 1981:7)

Figure 4: Reading as a constant process of guessing.

According to Anderson, comprehending a text in an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text. Efficient comprehending requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. Comprehending words sentences, and entire text, involves more than just relying on one's linguistic knowledge. As Anderson points out, "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well" (Anderson et al. 1977:369).

It is an obvious fact that reading comprehension in one's native language involves the role of knowledge of native text structure. Brewer (1980) points out that reading is a complex, interactive, hypothesis-generating psycholinguistic proces which is tried intimately to the reader's language proficiency. While there are basic similarities in the fluent reading process in various languages, it is natural to expect that non-native language proficiency or language differences may influence reading, and learning to read, a second language.

Comprehension of any kind, such as in reading, listening depends on what knowledge we get. Comprehension means relating what we know and do not, or new information, to what we already know, which is not a random collection of facts but a world view in each of our heads, called "cognitive structure" (Smith 1982:84).

Rivers claims that only a small part of the information necessary for reading comprehension comes from the printed page. She points out that readers have expectations about the content of what they are about to read and how it develops, which further stimulates readers as they continue reading by what they have already understood. The function of the symbols on the printed page is to reduce the doubts of the reader as

meaning is derived from the writing. Therefore, an efficient reader needs only schematic (prior knowledge indications of the actual visual forms (Rivers 1983).

Eskey argues that how well a student may know a language is related to how s/he can comprehend what she reads. She can not read in that language with good comprehension if the subject of the text is one she knows nothing or very little about, and therefore would have no real interest in it. Reading comprehension is most likely to occur when students are reading what they want to read, or at least what they see as some good reason to read (Eskey 1986).

The reading goal is to read for meaning or to recreate the writer's meaning. Reading to improve pronunciation, practice grammatical forms and study vocabulary do not constitute reading at all because, by definition, reading involves comprehension. When readers are not comprehending, they are not reading. Comprehension of a text relates to a reader's experiences and knowledge of how to bear the words that have been decoded by the writer. Badrawi states that "comprehension is a mental process. It is not getting meaning from the printed page, as there is no meaning there, but only lines and cirves that we call letters and from which we build words" (Badrawi 1992:16).

Levels of Reading Comprehension

When a foreign language learner reads, she faces both a problem of language and a problem of language and a problem of reading. He might have difficulty applying his first language (L1) top-down skills to

the second language (L2) reading. When she reads he has to find factual information, make inferences, evaluations and applications.

Finding factual information is perhaps the easiest to achieve and it is the area the teachers frequently ask questions about comprehension. However answers to such questions are no guarantee of full comprehension of the text because such questions usually require direct answers from the text. Therefore, when the learner gives correct answers to such questions it does not mean that he has a full understanding of the facts, can reach conclusions and form opinions on what he reads.

When the learner is asked to **make inferences**, come to conclusions or express opinions, he has to realise that some information in the passage is hidden; therefore he has to establish relationships among different pieces of information himself. In order to achieve this, the intentions of the writer and the expectations and the background knowledge of the reader should match. He cannot make the intended inference when the information in the text cannot find a reference among the reader's experiences.

Another level of reading comprehension is **evaluation**. The reader evaluates the material or the content of the text by sampling. He searches through his knowledge of the subject matter to assess information and evaluate what has been said. He mesures the writer's actions, ideas and thoughts against his own. As a result, the information contained in the text and the writer's intended message find their place in the reader's schema. If the subject matter of the text is remote from the reader's schema, it is very difficult for the reader to evaluate the

information. Moreover, when he is asked an evaluation question beginning "why do you think...?", he keeps returning back to the text in search of a concrete answer as if it was there, whereas, he should come up with a subjective evaluation expressing his opinion. Since a subjective evaluation draws on personal experiences, beliefs, opinions shaped by the reader's cultural background, in this case the learner finds himself surrounded by a maze shaped by the foreign cultural elements.

Putting what has been learned our understood through reading into practice is the application level of reading comprehension. With an increasing emphasis on the communicative aspect of language (stressing the formation of communicative competence) and on notional functional syllabi; many language programmes are developed within integrated curricula. In these syllabi, reading and writing instructions are integrated. The learner is expected to transfer the rhetorical or contextual information obtained from the reading text to writing. Therefore, the reader will take an active participation in the subject as a writer. The advantage of an activity like this is the ease with which one can focus on the implied presence of the reader in the writing process.

Another application of the gained information from the text into real life is when the learner is expected to reorganize valid applications of the writer's ideas. At this level the learner is expected to learn certain behaviour through reading in reference to specific cultural aspects and, therefore, facilitate his social adjustment to the country in which the foreing language is spoken. This is also an assumption based on building communicative competence in the notional / functional approach to language teaching. However, in this case the learner is expected to act

according to certain norms in society, whereas, the former approach is used for EAP, ESP situations.

Contemporary perspectives on reading guide the people dealing with EFL reading in the production, selection and evaluation of materials. The purpose of the learner in learning English (EAP, ESP, EFL, etc) will determine the content and the subject matter of the material in use. The material which most contributes to the learner's participation and interaction will be employed in the classroom. Therefore, the needs and expectations of a learner should be very carefully analysed.

Good and Bad Readers

In the traditional approach to reading there have been attempts to distinguish between "good" and "bad" readers. Smith (1970) chooses the words "efficient" and "inefficient". An "efficient" reader is "a person who can make use of all the redundancy in a piece of text" (cited in Eskey, 1979: 69). One of the characteristics of this fluent reader, as Smith (1985) states, is that the reader considers "the information in the print that is more revelant to his/her purpose", as she does this "selectively" (p.103). Coady (1979) categorizes readers as "proficient" and "poor". Proficient readers do not make wrong guesses, while poor readers make wrong guesses since they activate the wrong past experience (previous information) which will cause them to make wrong future predictions. Proficient readers know how to make use of every cue in order to get the most useful information. On the other hand poor

readers are not capable of making necessary compensations to make any significant comprehension.

The following excerpt bellow demonstrates how Eskey (1988, cited in Paran, 1996: 94) describes good reader from another aspect:

> Good readers know the language. They can decode, with occasional exceptions both the lexical units and syntactic structures they encounter in texts, and they do so, for the most part, not by guessing from the context or prior knowledge of the world, but by a kind of automatic identification that requires no conscious cognitive effort.

Carrel (1988) distinguishes between is skilled readers and lower proficiency readers, that is skilled readers are able to make necessary shifts from one processing mode to other while the latter relies on one or the other mode of processing which causes problems in comprehension. Carell attributes the reasons why lower proficiency readers rely on only one processing mode, particularly on bottom-up decoding, to five reasons: (1) lack of appropriate background knowledge; (2) failure to activate the necessary schemata; (3) lack of the knowledge of the language; (4) individual differences in learning styles; and (5) misconceptions about reading (Hadley, 1993).

The same issue has been presented with regard to gaps to be filled in the message that the text bring my Bransford et al (1984). If people lack the knowledge needed to make assumptions or inferences necessary to fill in the gaps, then, they will not be able to process the text properly.

Reader's intent should be taken into account. Unless we read for pleasure, it may put us under constraint. Rogers et al (1984) suggests three techniques for controlling the reader's intent for the sake of enchancing learning: learning objectives, inserting questions, and asking high-order questions (questions that require top-down processing).

Another factor, presumably the most important of all mentioned so far, as acknowledged by many scholars, is the **cultural background** of the reader/learner.

2.2.3. A Historical Overview of the Models of Reading

With the influence of cognitive psychology, models of human information processing (reading process) have changed a lot. The models of the 1970s were linear information processing models. Since then interactive models of information have come to stage. These can be conveniently classified into three major groups: bottom-up, top-down (psycholinguistic model of reading – Goodman's Model of Reading), and interactive view of reading.

2.2.3.1. Bottom-up Model of Reading

Those who accepted reading as a passive process on the part of the reader explain this to be a bottom up processing. This model describes reading as a one-way flow of information starting with the visual input and proceeding through a series of progressively higher-order processing stages. So it is a linear process of decoding of structures in a text from the smallest to the largest units. In this view, the reader

first identifies each letter in a text. This enables the reader to identify the words to form sentences, sentences to form paragraphs, and paragraphs to form complete texts.

According to Carrel, Devine, and Eskey bottom-up processing is elicited by the incoming data; the features of the data enter the system through the best fitting, bottom-level schemata. Bottom-up processing is, therefore, called **data driven**.

This model of reading reveals the effects of behaviorism. Behaviorists attempt to explain reading by reffering to what could be objectively observed, described and measured. Gough (1972) described reading as the processing of each and every letter (Coady, 1979).

Changes in theoretical approaches to second language learning have been widely influential on the models of neading. After the 1960s the behavioral learning theories were replaced by cognitive learning theories. Researchers began to deal with human memory and attention and tried to explain how these processes influence reading (Samuels and Kamil, 1984)

2.2.3.2. Top-down Model of Reading

In language learning attention has shifted from the teacher to the learner, from learning as the retention of information to learning as an active, dynamic process. During 1960s and early 1970s, researchers attempted to describe what a reading model must account for. Goodman's efforts on developing a model of reading from 1965 to 1970 culminated in a model often called "reading as a psycholinguistic game",

namely, top-down processing (Samuels and Kamil, 1984). Goodman in his model views reading as a psycholinguistic process in which language and thoughts interact and he observes that the "reader reconstructs, as best as she can a message which has been encoded by a writer as a graphic display" (Goodman 1971: 135). Although , Goodman created his model by using scientific methodology and terminology of psycholinguistics, he mainly concentrated on how language operates in a social context. Goodman assumes that common experience, concepts, interests, and life – styles of readers, who share social and cultural backgrounds, are reflected in how they read and what they infer from reading. Thus, for Goodman, readers bring and seek for meaning during the act of reading (Carrell, Devine & Eskey, 1988)

This approach which came as a reaction to bottom-up processing is a knowledge – based process in which the reader actively involved in comprehension of the text. Readers make predictions about the printed information based on their previous life experience (schemata) and confirm their interpretation of the text by samplig. Top-down processing occurs as the system makes general predictions based on higher-level general schemata and then searches the input for information to fit into these partially satisfied, higher-order schemata. Top-down processing is therefore, called conceptually driven (Carell, Devine, and Eskey 1989).

The reader is engaged in this interactive operation operation from the most general to the most specific (Coady, 1979; Smith 1985). The writer is the encoder of the text and formulates both the deep and surface structure of the text. The beter rhe reader is able to make correct

prediction the less visual perceptual informaion she requires. Goodman claims that:

> The reader does not use all the information avaiable to him. Reading is a process in which the reader picks and chooses from the available information only enough to select and predict a language structure which is decodable. It is not in any sense a precise perceptual process (Goodman 1973b:164).

Goodman characterizes reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game that reader is moving from meaning to word from whole to part. In this process, readers draw on their pre-existing knowledge and bring their experimental and conceptual development to bear on the task. The goal is always some degree of **comptruction**, defined as construction of a message (Goodman 1967:128). He also states that "readers use the smallest amount of text information necessary in relation to their existing linguistic and conceptual schmeta to get the meaning" (Goodman 1973b:158).

In the light of these models, Coady (1979) developed a model in which he presented reading to be based on successful interaction of higher-level conceptual ağabeylities, backround knowledge, and process strategies.

Conceptual abilities refer to intellectual capacity such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, and infer. **Background knowledge** includes sociocultural knowledge of mainly a reader's his/her own community. **Process strategies** refer to the abilities and skills to reconsruct the meaning of the text through sampling based on the knowledge of "grapheme-morphophoneme correspondences syllable-

morpheme information, syntactic information, (deep and surface), lexial meaning, contextual meaning and cognitive" strategies. For background, Coady states that:

> Background knowledge becomes an important voriable when we notice, as many have, that the students with a Western backrground of same kind learn English faster, on the average than those without such a background (Coady 1979:7).

Coady also suggests that background knowledge may be able to compensate for certain syntactic deficiencies:

> The subject of reading materials should be of high interest and relate well to the backround of the reader, since strong semantic input can help compensate when syntactic control is weak. The interest and background knowledge will enable the student to comprehend a reasonable rate to keep him involved in the material in spite of its syntactic difficulty (Coady 1979:12).

Although both Goodman and Smith have been strong and influential proponents of an interactional conceptualization of reading, both of them did not deal with schema theory (Samuels&Kamil, 1984). Bearing reading through the pyscholinguistic model in mind is not sufficient to give emphasis on the role of background knowledge. Recent research indicates that what the reader brings to the reading task is more complicated and more powerful than the general psycholinguistic model suggests. Research in the last two decades have indicated that both bottom-up (text-based) and top-down (knowledge-based) processes could be utilized to facilitate comprehension (Carrell, 1988). The marriage of these two processes gave birth, to a new model of reading, that is, "skills

at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text" (Carell 1988:59).

2.2.3.3. Interactive Model of Reading

Rumelhart (1977) argued that the interactive model can explain the reading process. This view acknowledges the role of prior knowledge and ability to predict, however, at the same time, does not appear to ignore the essence of rapid and accurate processing of the words present in the text. Simply stated, reading process is complete if both higher-and lower- level skills involved together, in a way completing each other (Carrell, 1987; Grabe, 1991).

Stanovich (1980) introduced an interactive-compensatory model of reading. In this model, the reader uses both bottom-up and top-down processing to compensate for difficulties that stem from reader's systemic (linguistic/structural) or schematic unfamilarity with the text. According to the theorist whenever readers can not decipher the intended meaning by their linguistic knowledge, they become dependent on the lexical cues, or vice versa. From this model Schema theory has derived and brought a new dimension for reading methodologies (Carrell, Devine & Eskey, 1988).

2.2.3.4. The Schema Theory Model

The origins of schema theory date as for back as to the 1920s and have origins in the Gestalt psychology (the study of mental organization) of the 1920s and 1930s. The term "gestalt can be explained

as "shape" or "form." Gestalt psychologists' insight was that" the properties of a whole experience cannot be inferred from its parts" (Cook, 1994). In other words, the best way to understand any piece of information is to perceive it as wholes, then, it will be easy to make a sense of the message that text brings.

Taking its roots from Gestalt psyholoy, schema theory basically claims that every or any new experience gains meaning if memory has a stereotypical version of a similar experience (cited in Anderson & Pearson 1988:38). Therefore, the role of background knowledge in language comprehension has been formalized as **schema theory**. The theory is based on the idea that meaning is achieved when readers can successfully activate appopriate schemata in their interaction with the text by employing top-down and bottom-up processing.

Rumelhart (1977) describes schema theory as "a theory about how konwledge is presented and about how that presentation facilitates the use of the knowledge in particular ways". Within the framework of this theory he states that "all knowledge is packed into units which are called schemata". According to Rumelhart one function of schemata is the construction of an interpretation of an event, object or situation and another function of schemata is to help predict the events that have not been observed. Rumelhart (1981) claims that, any text, either spoken or written, does not possess meaning by itself. A text only provides directions for listeners or readers as to how they should find and bring back, from their own, previously acquired knowledge to construct meaning. This previously acquired knowledge is called the reader's

background knowledge, and the previously acquired structures are **schemata** (Adams and Collins 1979; Rumelhart 1981).

By the using of a schema, the process of interpretation is guided by the principle that every input is mapped against some existing schema and that all aspect of that schema must be compatible with the input information. This principle results in bottom-up and top-down processing. The schema theoretical model imposes that skilled readers shift their mode of processing (bottom-up/top-down) whereas less skilled readers tend to rely in one direction (Carrell, Devine &Eskey, 1988).

By considering the following mini-text the effect of background knowledge, schematic interpretation, and simultaneity of top-down and bottom-up processing can be understood;

"The policeman held up and stopped the car"

(Rumelhart 1977: 267).

To understand this sentence, we try to relate it to something familiar. There are many schemata possible, but the most likely is the one involving a traffic police officer who is signalling to a driver of a car to stop. When it is interpreted against that schema, a number of related concepts come up which are not literally mentioned in the text. In particular, it can be imagined that the car has a driver and that the policeman got the car to stop through signalling to the driver, who then put on the brakes of the car, which, in turn caused the car to stop. In this interpretation, the cause of the car's stopping is almost operation of the car's brakes. Further, the significance of the policeman's holding up his hand is that of a signal to the driver to stop. The fact is neither stated in the sentence nor is it even in the direct visual perception of such a

situation, but is rather a fact in prior cultural knowledge about the way tracffic police are known to communicate with automobile drivers. If the police officer were known to be Superman and the car were known to be without a driver, the text would change and a completely different schema would be required to understand the text. For example when the text is interpreted against the Superman schema, it is interpreted that by holding up his hand Superman used a direct physical mechasim for stopping the car.

The following diagram shows that when a different reading-comprehension question asked, a completely opposed answer would probably be received through the two schemata that activated in the mind of the reader:

QUESTION	ANSWER	
	Traffic police officer schema	Superman Schema
a) Did the policeman's hand touch the car?	No	Yes
b) Were the car's brakes applied?	Yes	No

(Carrel, Devine & Eskey 1989: 78)

Schank and Abelson (1977) spoke of "**scripts**" and "**frames**". Scripts are "knowledge structures," that describe "appropriate sequences of events in a particular context." Frames are constructed out of our past experiences. They provide a framework which will enable us to make sense of our new experiences (Brown and Yule 1983: 241). For example,

if a child's previous experience of "going to the dentist" is a painful one, this will probably cause him/her to reject seeing the dentist. Unless the scripts or schemata are complete, then we will find it difficult to comprehend a text since there will be a mismatch between what the text presents and our schemata.

The schematic process allows people to make intelligent guesses, and to interpret experiences quickly. If your friend says "I spent the whole afternoon in the library, without asking or being informed, you can imagine that she looked for a source book, sat at a table and read books, magazines, etc. there. It is often suggested that it is our previous experiences that allow us to make such a prediction (Coady, 1979; Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

According to Yule and Brown (1983:249) "the past operatis as an organized mass rather than as a group of elements each of which retains its specific character. It is the "schema" that gives structure to that "organized mass." In other words, as Nunan (1993:71) points out, "the knowledge that every person carries around their heads is organized into interrelated patterns. These patterns come into existence as a result of our previous experience.

Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) deseribe two types of schemata: **content schema** and **formal schema**. Content schema is the background of the content area of a text. The notion of schema is handled with its relation to language and cultural understanding. Formal schemata is the background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical structures of different types of texts. Schema used in interpretation of all information processes are "bulding blocks of cognition" (cited in Samuels & Kamil, Rumelhart,

1977). These building blocks have a very important role in the process of interpreting sensory data, and in calling back the information from memory.

For the purposes of this study, in order to test the effects of culture-specific background knowledge concerning the content area of the text, only the content schemata are handled. According to Jiang (2000), a schema is an organized sybolic representation of one's cultural experiences including background beliefs, thoughts and ways of living via language. Reading in this sense requires being able to activate relevant schemata in relation to the context.

Furthermore, Carrell (1983) reasoned that the availability of the content and formal schemata is a prerequisite for relevant schema activation. More specifically, it is assumed that if readers do not posssess one of the required background knowledge, the possessed schemata, especially the content schemata, would compensate for the absence of the other.

It is assumed that if readers are familiar with the content, then they can provide a conceptual framework necessary for understanding the characters, events and the setting of a story. If not it is assumed that readers will have difficulties in comprehending the story, due to false schema activation or absence of culture-specific schemata. Briefly it is indicated that the better a reader can acces background konwledge, the better the text will be comprehended.

According to schema theory backgdound knowledge has an important role in language comprehension. Any text, spoken or written,

does not carry any meaning; meaning, instead, comes from the background knowledge that the learnes bring to a text. Here the basic point is that, the meaning the writter intended to bring to the text is not in the text itself, instead, brought to the text by the reader (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983).

2.2.4. Cultural Content Schemata and Reading Comprehension

New information, new concepts, new ideas can have meaning only when they can be related to something the individual already knows. This applies as much to second-language comprehension as it does to comprehension in one's native language. Anderson et al considering the vital role of comprehension in a foreign language, and specifically reading-comprehension in EFL stated that "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well" (Anderson et al. 1977:369). Reader tries to construct the meaning from the text by adding whatever she knows about what she reads. As all the information necessary for comprehending a text is not in the text, the role of the reader's prior knowledge in reading comprehension becomes crucial. Goodman (1967), argues that because comprehension results from reader-text transaction, what the reader knows, who the reader is, what values guide the reader, and what purposes or interests the reader has, will play a vital role in the reading process. Rumelhart (1981) states that schemata represent knowledge at all levels of abstraction. So it is hypothesized that the readers who can not mobilize the missing information in the text from their knowledge repertoire will be at a disadvantage. This is reinforced by Carrel, Devine, and Eskey, as "the

schema theory of reading comprehension proposes that structures embodying backround knowledge provide the ideational scaffolding for understanding the setting, mood, characters, and chain of events in a text" (Carrel, Devine, and Eskey 1989:79). Comprehension is achieved as bits of information about an event, being exemplary of a particular class of events, that are incorporated or instantiated into the relevant schema.

There is a slowly growing body of literature examining the role of schemata in second-language reading comprehension. By the studies of EFL the new experimental research paradigms in schema theory put cultural schemata into perspective.

In making a text manifest and relevcant readers depend on their culture-specific prior knowledge (culture schema) which is imposed by their own society. As far as culture-specific schema is concerned, reading in native language is different from reading in foreign languages. For instance, conventionally activated schema for a cup of coffee for Turks, probably be some "brown liquid" with "strong small", which is served in small porcelain cups. Its reference as the "Morning coffee" for an ordinary Turkish housewife would be visiting friends for a chat, drinking coffee and fortune telling. Such a reference would be peculiar for many American women. Hence people of different cultures may refer to different concepts, content or items by using similar forms of language. For istance in the case of uttering the word "breakfast"; a Turk may probably be referring to "cheese, olives and bread", whereas an English man may most probably be referring to "bacon and eggs". Accordingly, the meaning that readers who are culturally familiar with

the text attribute may have a contextual effect which is most probably, more relevant than the efforts of those who are exposed to culturally novel information. For instance, the conceptualization of "dating" for a girl can be considered as a natural act in Italy, whereas, it can be considered as a shame on the part of the family, in many parts of Egypt. Hence, relevance or irrelevance of readers 'interpretations of a text depends on individuals' cultural identities. In order to achieve relevance readers aim at maximizing and establishing coherence in meaning. If the text exposes biased or ambiguous sentences that are irrelevant to the readers' world knowledge, then readers may fail to comprehend it. In order to understant the author's message in the following incident and judge the validity of the conclusion "Some psychologists must be misguided"; an EFL reader must be familiar with the culture-specific social context "Some Nottingham Forest fans are psychologist, and as all of their fans are misguided it follows that some psychologists must be misguided" (cited in Underwood & Batt 1996:189). The information is confusing for a reader who is not familiar with the team "Nottingham Forest". However, a British reader who is a fan of the well-known soccer team would easily grasp the intented meaning. Anderson et al (1977) presented the following text to a group of female students who were planning a carreer in music education and to a group of male students from weight-lifting class, both of whon had different interests and expectations:

> Every Saturday night four our good friends get together. When Jerry, Mike, and Pat arrived, Karen was sitting in her living room writing some notes. She quickly gathered the cards and stood up to greet her

> friends at the door. They followed her into the living room but as usual they couldn't agree an exactly what to play. Jerry eventually took a stand set her things up. Finally they began to play. Karen's recorder filled the room with soft and pleasant music. Early in the evening, Mike noticed Path's hands and many diamonds...
>
> (Brown and Yule 1983:248)

As they had expected, the female group interpret the passage as "a musical evening" whereas the male group as "people playing cards". This seems to indicate that personal interest, sex, beside cultural background cause readers to relate messages to certain contexts (Brown & Yule 1983; Bransford et al., 1986). Therefore, in EFL classes, where culturally unfamiliar input is presented in the text, wrong inferencing due to the absence of schemata may further influence the interpretations of other parts of the text, starting a chain reaction. As Goodman (1967) says, one forms expectations based on his prior knowledge of the text and the world, and seeks to confirm them on the basis in input from the text. If the reader possesses the schema assumed by the writer he can understand what is being stated effortlessly and make the inferences intended.

One of the early reports of the influence of cultural schemata is that of Barlett (1932), who reported observation of how Americans read and recalled stories based on North American Indian folk tales. Barlett recognized that when readers process unfamiliar texts, manifestations of cultural differences in schemata are evident. Kintsch and Greene (1978) presented American university students with two stories: one a Grimm fairy tale, the other an Apache folk tale. The analysis of the data obtained indicated that the American students better recalled the Brothers Grimm

story than the Apache folk tale, because they had the background knowledge for a Grimm fairy tale.

Carrell (1983) suggests that learning, reading and memory processes in a second language also depend on culture-specific knowledge of conventional situations called "scripts". A script for a recurrent type of a social event, such as eating in a restaurant (culture-specific) is specified. Schank and Abelson (1997) and other script theorists define a script as follows:

> Entry conditions, a sequence of goal directed scenes (entering and getting a table ordering, eating, paying bill and leaving), a sequence of actions within each scene (in the ordering scene custamer gets menu, customer decides to order gives order to waiter etc...).
>
> (Stillings et al., 1995:33).

According to Cook (1991), when readers are exposed to a familiar type of an event, they activate a culturally familiar script and may be at a loss if the other is required by the text. Hence, in a reading situation, where unfamiliar cues are in a presented, the reader's effort after generating a meaning ensures the adaptation of a context to a familiar script. Such an adaptation may lead to distortions[2] of meaning. For instance, a script for one culture may require some restaurants to have take away services. A familiar script which depicts a waiter working at a Kebab restaurant for a Turk may naturally be something like a waiter standing at the entrance of the restaurant and calling out and inviting guests in. However, a script in which a waiter is situated in a

[2] Carrell (1987) defines distortions as culturally inappropriate modifications of a text, often outright intrusions from another culture, in which unfamiliar ideas are interpreted, remembered and related in terms of another cultural schema (p.470).

booth, at the entrance of a drive-in fast food restaurant, and orders via microphone, as he welcomes guests in cars, would be very peculiar for an ordinary Turk. Consequently, due to the nature of scriptically, implicit information, readers may distort intended meanings. Hence it can be estimated that EFL readers need to employ appopriate culture schemata and scripts in comprehending a text.

Many linguists have questioned the usefulness of non-culture bound reading materials in foreign language teaching. In such an approach texts are designed on a subject familiar to the students and reflecting their own culture. This destroys the unity of language, separating it from its social context. The experiment conducted by Abdoljavad Jafarpur et al. (1980) at Pahlavi University (Shiraz, Iran) showed that the students who were given materials that related to the target culture had greater comprehension than those who were provided with English language reading materials artifically based on their own culture.

Carrell (1981) compared advanced EFL Japanese and Chinese subjects on recall of folktales from three different cultural orientations: native culture (Japanese or Chinese respectively), second culture (Western/European/English), and totally unfamiliar culture (American Apache Indian). Results indicated that the cultural origin of the text and the subjects' prior familiarity or lack of familarity with that culture affected the EFL subjects' judgements of the level of difficulty of the texts, as well as their recall of information from the texts. The cultural origin of the text had greater effect on the comprehension of the ESL

students than did the level of syntactic and semantic complexity of the text.

Johnson (1982) in her research probing into the effect of the reader's prior experience and difficult vocabulary on understanding of a text came to a conclusion that the variable of topic familarity or cultural context of a passage provided information about the interpretation of a passage provided information about the interpretation of a passage in terms of personal knowledge. Real experiences within the cultural context provided background information for more effective comprehension of a passage. The reader's misunderstanding of textual meaning on the linguistic level was accompanied by a misunderstanding on the conceptual level. The problems with language in the student's written recalls of unfamiliar sections of the passage seemend to be actually problems caused by a background knowledge of the topic. In conclusion she says "familarity with the culturally determined topic, knowledge obtained from real experiences in the foreign culture, is effective for reading comprehension of a passage on that topic" (1982:508). Lono (1987:81) points out that:

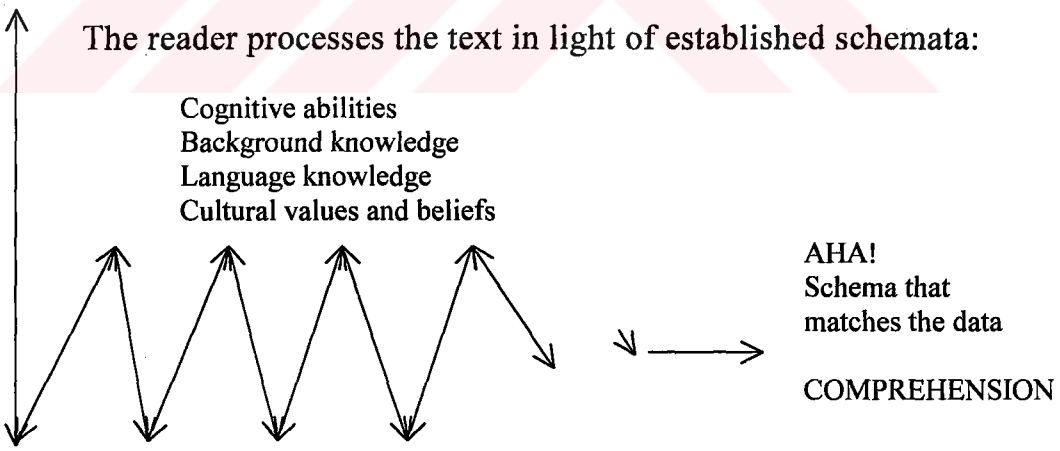
> Comprehension of a text implies understanding the overall message, above and beyond the literal meaning of the words used in a reading passage. It also includes understanding of concepts such as family, education and religion which may involve dimensions that are difficult for foreign students to understand because they are different from those in their own culture.

Thus, successful reading is a result of a simultaneous interaction among the conceptual abilities, background knowledge of the learner and

process strategies, such as sampling, predicting and testing the accuracy of the text against the schema, inherent in a text. The background knowledge of the learner affects the speed with which he learns a foreign language. If he needs to learn both cultural and linguistic aspects of that language it will take time to completely, master the language together with its cultural norms. Problems of reading, most scholars dealing with the subject say, do not usually arise from the complexity of language or unfamiliar words but from lack of knowledge of cultural concepts contained in the text. As a result accumulated past personal experiences play a vital role in reading comprehension because they enable the interaction between the text and the reader. Mikulecky, in the first chapter of her book 'A Short Course in Teaching Reading Skills' gives the following chart to explain the reading comprehension process:

Model of the Reading Comprehension Process:

The reader processes the text in light of established schemata:



The text provides new information to be processed:
Grapho-phonic information
Syntactic information
Semantic information
Illustrations
Genre information

The reader constructs the meaning of the text by interpreting textual information in the light of prior knowledge and experience (Mikulecky, 1990).

2.2.5. Research Evidence Based on the Content-Schema Theoretic View of Reading

The theoretical framework of the present study is based on previous research investigating the role of content schemata in foreign language reading comprehension. Schema theorists have conducted studies which support the view that reading involves more than the development of linguistic and decoding skills. It is estimated that background knowledge concerning the text will determine, at least in part, the success readers have with a given text.

The researchers of native and non-native reading comprehension recognized the importance of the reader's prior linguistic knowledge, background knowledge of the content area of the text, as well as the rhetorical structure of the text (Carell 1983; Carrell and Eisterhold 1983). It is possible to talk about two kinds of cultural background: the cultural background of the reader and the cultural background that the text brings. So studies showed how different cultural and social backgrounds influence people's interpretations of a text. There has been a considerable experimental research done, beside the ones previously showed, to assess the effects of culture specific schemata on reading comprehension.

Steffensen (1986) cites Steffensen and Joag-dev and Anderson's (1979) research which provided strong evidence supporting the notion

that cultural knowledge and beliefs influence what is comprehended from a text in native language. They studied two groups of subjects with different cultural heritages: a group of Asian Indians living in the USA and a group of Americans. Each subject was asked to read and recall two personal letters about an Indian and an American wedding. Since the wedding is a ceremony of great social significance, it was assumed that all adult members of a given society would have a well-developed schema about the marriage customs of their own culture, and a comparative lack of knowledge about the customs of foreign cultures. The researches found that; (a) subjects read the native passage dealing with their own cultural background faster and (b) recalled more of the passage. Furthermore (c) subjects produced more culturally biased distortions of the foreign passage. This result indicated that the schemata embodying knowledge of the content of a text exert a profound influence on how well the text will be understood and later recalled.

Two studies conducted by Johnson (1981, 1982) demonstrated similar effects of cultural schemata on reading comprehension. In the first study Johnson (1981) compared the effects of the effects of cultural background and language complexity of a text on reading comprehension. Iranian intermediate-to advanced level students and American students read Iranian (a Mullah Nasr-el Din Strory) and American (a Buffalow Bill story) folktales. Half of the subjects in each group read the stories in adapted (into their native language) or simplified (using more understandable structure) English; the other half read the unadapted versions of the same stories. Subjects were tested on their reading comprehension using multiple-choice questions on textually

explicit and implicit information, as well as free written recalls. Statistical analysis of the data indicated that the cultural origin of the story had greater effect on the comprehension of the ESL students than did the level of syntactic and semantic complexity of the text. That is, the Iranians performed better on the text from their native culture than on a text from American culture, and there were no differences in their performance between the structurally adapted (appropriate sentences to their native language) versions of the Iranian text. Johnson concluded from her results that if the EFL readers have the appropriate background schema for a text, they can cope equally well with unadapted, syntactically unsimplified texts.

In her next study of the culture-specificity of content schemata and their effects on EFL reading, Johnson (1982) examined the effect of prior cultural experience on EFL students' reading comprehension of information in a text linked to a familiar aspects of an American custom as opposed to information linked to unknown aspects of the custom. Just prior to testing, subjects had experienced a typical American Halloween celebration. The text, each student read, contained both familiar and unfamiliar (histosical) information based on the subjects' recent experience of the custom. Four groups of supjects read the text in different contitions. Group one read the passage without a list of important vocabulary. Group two studied the definition of target words before reading the passage. This group did not have the definition while reading the text. The third group studied target words before reading a text with the key vocabulary also defined in the text. Group four had the benefit of prior study of word definitions as well as the word defined in

the passage. Subjects were asked to participate in free recalls of the passage and recognition tasks. Statistical analysis of the recalls of the passage and of a sentence recognition text indicated that prior cultural experience prepared readers for comprehension of the familiar in the passage. (In addition, several different treatments concerning prior teaching of vocabulary in the text seemed not to have any significant effect on reading comprehension).

Three different types of vocabulary instruction prior to or existing at the same time with the reading when compared to the absence for text indiated that prior cultural experience prepared readers for comprehension of the familiar in the passage (An, Jung Hee, 1992:25).

Aron (1986) also carried out similar research concerning cultural background knowledge. Native (American) and nonnative (ESL students) readers at college level read two passages of different content. One passage dealt with a universal theme. The other passage was bound to American culture. Subjects showed no differences in the recall scores for the passage with the universal theme. However, for the passage dealing with American culture, native readers showed significantly higher recall scores than nonnative readers. The results indicate that while, native and nonnative speakers appeared to bring similar prior knowledge to the passage with a universal theme, they seemed to bring different degrees of prior knowledge to the passage with a culture-bound theme.

In a training study, Nelson and Schmid (1989) also found strong effects of culture-specific schemata on EFL reading. This study was conducted to test whether the reading comprehension skills in the native

culture transfer to improve readers' performance on standardized reading tests, or not. 44 intermediate Egyptian (ESL) students were tested. Two experimental classes received 8 weeks of reading instruction based on Egyptian or Arabic culture readings which included Arabic short stories and folktales translated into English and Arabic magazines on familiar topics. Control classes, on the other hand, read passages on American culture. Although the reading passages were different, teaching goals and methods were consistent between groups. The results indicate that experimental classes demonstrated significantly higher scores in reading comprehension from pre-to post-test than the control subjects.

Carrell (1987) reported on interesting study on the interactive effect of both culture-specific, content schemata and organizational schemata. Two groups of high intermediate ESL students read two texts: one text with culturally familiar content, the other with culturally unfamiliar content. Within each group, one half of the subjects read the texts in a familiar, well-organized rhetorical structure, the other half read the texts in an unfamiliar, altered rhetorical structure. Results showed that when both rhetorical structure and content are familiar, the reading is relatively easy; when both form and content are unfamiliar, the reading is relatively difficult. More interestingly culture-specific content schemata affected reading comprehension to a greater extent than organizational schemata.

Carrell & Floyd (1987) conducted a study to demonstrate that students' readings can be improved by helping them to build background knowledge on the topic prior to the reading task. Intermediate ESL students were divided into two groups as experimental and control.

Using pre – and post - tests a half of each group received syntactically more complex versions of the text passages than the other half. The experimental group was taught cultural background information between pre – and post – testing. Their reading comprehension was facilitated by the information provided. Differences in the syntactic complexity showed no significant effect on ESL readers' comprehension.

Nunan (1985) searched whether content familarity is a more accurate predictor of reading difficulty than linguistically determined predictability measures for ESL readers. The unfamiliar text which was rated by a number of readability analysis as being slightly easier than the familiar text in terms of linguistic constituents, was found to be significantly more difficult than the familiar text.

Yousef (1968) used Middle – Eastern employees of an American business organization as his subjects. He found that whenever the students were asked to answer objective questions concerning American behavioral patterns directly from a text, they did well; however, when the question related to general aspects of American culture, their performance level decreased dramatically. They continued to see situations perhaps unconsciously, in terms of their own native culture. After a period of cultural orientation, their negative attitudes towards the target culture, expressed by the multiple–choice selections in answer to situations contextualized questions, appeared to be somewhat resolved and a gradual acceptance of the target language was indicated.

Jiang (2000) designed a survey of word associations for native Chinese speakers (NCE) and native English speakers (NES). The survey for NCE was in Chinese, and that for NES was in English. Ten words

which were related most closely to people's lives were chosen. The subjects were asked to write down six additional words or expressions that they associated with each of ten words. The Chinese words and phrases associated by the NCE subjects were translated into English. Then, all the items listed by the subjects were classified into different categories. As a result, it was found that the survey of word associations indicated a close relationship between language and culture and the two could not exist without each other.

Gatbonton and Tucker (1971) drew attention towards Filipino students' tendency to apply culturally conditioned value judgements and attitudes to American short stories. The results of the study clearly indicated that a group of Filipino high school students who received cultural orientation course performed better than those who did not. This experimental research verifies the basis of schema theory which proposes that knowledge of culture has an influence upon meaning making.

Atlı (1989), in his study of the analysis of an elementary level textbook prepared by the Ministry of the National Education of Turkey, drew the attention towards the abundance of Turkish culture-based elements mainly focused on the "holiday" theme and argued that only including native culture-based elements in texts do not foster foreign language, learning. It is impossible to disagree with Atlı in this context since the use of only native culture-based elements are not sufficient to learn a foreign language. However the passages must interest people and be relevant to the age and interest of students besides being authentic.

A number of English as a foreign-language studies have shown that prior background knowledge of the content area of a text, what

Carrell (1983 b) has called a reader's content schemata, significantly affects reading comprehension of that text.

These studies showed that each group of native and nonnative subjects read faster, and recalled more of the culturally familiar text than of the culturally unfamiliar texts and that cultural schemata facilitate reading comprehension.

Furthermore contextual knowledge enhances the reader's cognitive predictions of what a text is going to be about and therefore, facilitates the reader's top-down processing of a text. On the contrary, a missing or inadequate schema for a particular topic, leads to a slow grasp of the meaning. At worst, it leads to total misinterpretation.

2.2.6. Some Modes of Presenting Culture in Class

Second-language teachers need a definition a thematical organization, and at least an elementary knowledge of the culture. Their next step is to develop teaching-learning procedures for conveying the chosen information to the students. As attention has turned to the growing need for including more culture in language courses and for developing greater expertise in ways of teaching a second culture, new ideas for presenting culture have been proposed.

Although certain limitations are inherent in the classroom situation, culture can be taught as part of the class and homework assignments. It can serve as a valuable lesson for those who will never have the opportunity to visit another country and as preparation for those

who do eventually have contact with native speakers of the second language.

As is true in other aspects of the class, teachers cannot do all the work, nor do they need to. **Students** are capable of gaining a great deal of information on their own, with guidance. Assigned reports and projects geared to promote cultural knowledge can be an important adjunct to the material that teachers that provide. For example, early in their exposure to language study students can prepare maps. Working with maps will help them to locate the country as well as the important cities and regions within the country. Subsequent to the map project, they can begin to delve into other aspects of the country's geopraphy and geographic location. What is the country's relationship with other countries? With whow they trade and for what products? What are the staples in the people's diet? What are the principal occupations? Students can find to many of these questions in the school or public library. Teachers should be ready to help with answers that they cannot find, either by answering the questions or suggesting other sources of information (Chastain 1988:308).

Jenks (1974 b) advocates an approach to teaching culture in which the teacher provides questions that the students are to answer. These are not questions to which the students already know the answers but are questions that require the students to use the library and perhaps other resource centers to find out the answers to the questions. For example, the teacher might ask students what the exchange rate is between the dollar and the various currencies of Latin America and what is the average wage in each of the countries. Once this information is

obtained, students can be asked to determine by studying the advertisements in a Latin American newspaper how long the average worker must labor for a pair of shoes, a television, a car, a gallon of milk, and so on. The next step would be to compare the results with the cost of similar products in the student's own country. To avoid possible frustration with difficult research questions, the teacher would need either to choose her questions carefully or make clear to the students that the answers to some of the questions may be unavailable in their library. The important secondary outcome of this approach is that students learn to find their own answers to the questions.

According to Chastain (1988) another potential source of cultural information is student knowledge or experience with particular aspects of the second culture. It is not uncommon for one ro more of the students to have some information about the second culture that the teacher does not know. Many students take a second language because they have had prior contact with the people and the culture of the foreign country. A survey of the class members at the beginning of the year may reveal students who have collections of stamps, coins or jewelry from the second country, who have traveled in the country, who have relatives of friends who might serve as resource, persons for culture content. Such assets complement the teacher's own cultural knowledge and enable him to expand his cultural offerings to the class.

The primary responsibility for culture content lies with the **teacher** and the textual materials. The culture information of most texts is inadequate, but choosing a book that incorporates culture into its format is a helpful beginning. Joiner (1974), for example, has prepared a

checklist for evaluating the culture content of second – language texts. The following paragraphs contain descriptions and examples of various methods teachers have used to present cultural information in language classes (cited in Chastain 1988: 309).

The **culture aside** is probably the most widely used approach to the teaching of culture. A culture aside is an unplanned, brief culture comment. During the class, the teacher commonly takes advantage of relevant topics as they arise to give the students bits of cultural information. For example, if the students have the word "coffee", the teacher can differentiate between the coffee drunk in their country and that of the second culture and when and where people normally drink coffee. The advantage of this approach is that the information is pertinent to class content. The disadvantage is that overall the culture information presented to the class is likely to be disorganized and incomplete.

The teacher can also prepare **lecture presentations** in which he discusses some characteristic of the second culture. For example, at Christmas he might describe the similarities and differences between the two cultures in the ways in which the people observe this holiday season. These comparisons should be carefully prepared in advance, but they should be so long as to lose the students' attention or to take too much time from the remainder of the class. Interspersed with other techniques, lecture presentations can give the students many facts in a short period of time.

Taylor (1972) describes a **slice-of-life technique** for teaching culture. Using this technique, the teacher chooses a small segment of life

from the second culture that is presented to the students at the beginning or end of the class period. The point is made with a minimum of comment and a maximum of dispatch. The information is valuable and interesting without requiring a great deal of class time. For example, the teacher might bring a second- language calendar to class and point out to the students in what ways it is different from those they are accustomed to seeing.

A **culture assimilator** is another means of studying cultural information in class. It consists of three parts: (1) a short passage demonstrating an intercultural exchange in which a misunderstanding occurs, (2) four possible interpretations of what transpired, and (3) feedback for the students as to the correct answer. Bals (1974) gives an example in which the afternoon visit of a young American to a German home does not turn out as well as he had anticipated. Knowing that a gift is appropriate, he presents the hostess with a bouquet of red roses. However, he is startled to notice that she reacts negatively to the gift. The interpretations are (1) the hostess is allergic to roses; (2) the hostess prefers to buy her own flowers; (3) flowers are appropriate only when the guest is having dinner; or (4) red roses are given to sweethearts, not to hostess. The students finish by learning the correct answer, number 4, and discussing the implications. The focus on confusion caused by differences in cultural expectations is an excellent means of developing students insights into culture differences that can cause misunderstanding and even hostility. This type of activity has the potential to help create insight into and tolerance of cultural diversity. The disadvantages of

culture assimilators are that they require a high degree of familarity with the culture and a great deal of time to prepare.

A **culture capsule** is also used to teach culture. It is a brief description of one aspect of the second culture followed by a discussion of the contrasts between the cultures of the first and second languages. For example, the teacher might describe postelementary education in the other culture. This description would include types of schools, courses, and students. In the follow-up discussion, the students discuss and summarize the principal differences between the educational system of the second culture and that of their own. Given the knowledge needed to describe the second culture, the teacher can prepare culture capsules without too much additional work. Another advantage is that the students become involved in the activity and have an opportunity to consider basic characteristics of their own culture.

Some teachers use **minidrams (or miniskits)** to help students visualize culture content. In this approach, students incorporate the culture being learned into their actions as they perform in selected situations. Behmer (1972) has worked with this technique. With a little ingenuity, the teacher can think of other situations suitable for miniskits. Certainly, any time students are acting out dialogs or role playing, the teacher should insist on the appropriate actions to fit the words being spoken. If a video tape recorder is available, the most interesting and informative skits can be preserved for use with future classes.

An interesting approach incorporating both the teaching of language and culture has been developed at the University of Georgia by Kalivoda, Morain, and Elkins (1971). An extension of the "total physical

response" approach to the teaching of second languages, the **audio-motor unit** is a technique in which students act out commands given by the teacher. By choosing, culture-rich situations, the teacher can combine teaching of language with teaching of culture. For example, after having been told that they are in a restaurant, the students are asked to pick up their napkins, unfold them, put them on their laps, pick up their forks in their left hands, pick up their knives in their right hands, cut a piece of meat, put it in their mouths, put down their knives and forks, and so on. As the students perform these actions, first following the teacher's cues and later on their own, they are practicing important cultural differences in eating habits.

Language teachers may focus students' attention on **social-psychological contrasts** between the two cultures as a means of making students aware of the differences between their culture and that of the second language. Students begin by reading that contain information about the contrasts. Later, they prepare and participate in discussions, role plays, case studies, dramatizations, televised skits, or other projects that exemplify the influence of these contrasts in daily life (Damen, 1987 – cited in Chastain 1988:311).

Another approach is to present a **critical incident** in which some problem occurs in the interactional patterns of people from different cultures. Students consider the situation and the reactions of the people involved and comment on the cultural values represented by the actions of each. Their objective is to reach a consensus on a course of action that would have been more appropriate in that particular situation (Damen, 1987).

Because students are so completely a product of the culture in which they were reared, gaining insight into their own culture and understanding that of the second language requires that they become conscious of the way they themselves think and live. **Self-awareness techniques** serve to raise to consciousness those basic beliefs that govern their values, attitudes, and actions and enable students to begin to understand the role of culture in society and in individual lives. Teachers may may use sensitivity exercises, self-assesment questionnaires, problem solving, profiles of personal attitudes, checklists of value orientations, or listening to the opinions of others as a means of increasing their awareness of their own cultural orientation (Damen, 1987).

The way people in the second language use language to express themselves reflects the way the organize reality. Language teachers sensitive to the relationship between language and culture can explore with the students **language and culture connections** that occur in class. For example, formal and informal second-person forms reflect fundamental societal relationships that students may not underestand fully without additional explanation. In addition to language per se, proverbs, sayings, supersitions, metaphors, humor and sarcasm all provide interesting and provocative examples of the use of language as it reflects culture and the influence of culture on people's lives (Damen, 1987).

Newspapers and **magazines** are as important for their cultural content as for their factual content. Every class should have these materials available for the students, both for browsing and for assigned

class projects. Browsing time does not have to be lenghty, and assignments do not have to require advanced linguistic skills. Asking the students to survey articles on currently popular clothing styles, movies, TV programs, and books would be interesting informative and relatively simple for each student to accomplish. The more capable students can do independent projects and prepare a report for the class. By planning activities based on the content of the newspapers and magazines and the abilities of the students, the teacher can make these supplemental reading materials an important addition to the teaching of culture. Without guidance, however, the wealth of information they contain may lie useless and untouched in the back of the room. The students will benefit from such materials only if they are assisted in doing so.

Bulletin Boards can be a striking means of presenting cultural information while at the same time brightening up the classroom. Students often have a difficult time attempting to visualize the cultural element being described. Carefully selected pictures and art work placed on the bulletin board can help eliminate this problem. Old magazines and newspapers are a rich source of pictures, cartoons, and articles for collection, organization, and display. If the teacher does not have the time to search for appropriate materials, faster students needing extra work or slower students seeking extra caredit can look for interesting visuals dealing with certain cultural themes. Advertisements are interesting and contain a great deal of information about what people eat, wear, and so an. The best displays can be labeled and saved for other classes.

Visual aids such as films, filmstrips, slides, and photographs can make a vital contribution to the stimulation of interest in the second culture and to a clearer perception of the way of life. Telling students about outdoor markets, squares and other points of interest only suffices if pictures are not available for student viewing. The teacher should become acquainted with the holdings of nearby film libraries and order films each year. Slides taken by the teacher add a touch of personal authenticity to the teacher's credibility, and the teacher should show them to students at all levels, varying the commentary to the students' linguistic level. All the slides may be shown at once, or the teacher can select them them individually to illustrate specific aspects of culture. Drawings and models (for example, the Eiffel Tower) prepared by artistically talented students can be saved from year to year to add a visual dimension to teacher and textbook descriptions.

Learning activities focusing on culture need not be restricted to the classroom. Many possibilities for extending student familarity with the second culture exist beyond the classroom, and the teacher can enlist the assistance of other teachers and club members to help organize and supervise these activites. If the students and teachers wish to focus their attention on a certain country or cultural area, they can plan **an area-specific** study. After choosing the country or area, they decide on the topics of interest, and students begin to collect information. They may go to the library, interview people familiar with the area, make surveys, take polls, and compile reports of information to share with the class (Damen, 1987).

Language classes may also undertake a cross-cultural **case study.** This activity, requires that the students analyze the situation, identify the problem(s), and suggest solutions. As they complete the activity, they have to deal with the values, assumptions, conversational styles, role expectations, opinions, problem-solving strategies, and nonverbal behavior of the participants in the case.

Most language students also have access to individuals who are native speakers or who know a great deal about the culture of the language they are studying. Therefore, a possible activity is **informant interviewing**, which can provide a wealth of cultural information while fostering a more personal feeling for the people and their culture (Chastain 1988:314). However, culture content must be presented at a level and a manner to which the students can attach some relationship between the information and their own background experiences.

CHAPTER 3

EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

3.1. Introduction

Konya Gazi High School is one of the schools that give instruction in English. The students coming in as beginners or false beginners in English are trained at the preparatory class and later if they choose English class they are heavily trained in English. The four skills in language (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking) are stressed equally.

Reading components of the books mainly stress the skimming and scanning skills. The comprehension questions following the text are generally factual questions requires direct answers and texts. The students deal with inferential from the evaluative questions less than factual questions. A learner of English trained in reading skills cannot learn how to make inferences and evaluations only by being asked factual questions.

Another problem arises from the cultural content of the material. Since the students are not trained about the culture of the target language for long hours, the application level of reading comprehension with material containing excessive foreign cultural information is almost impossible. This is a level at which the learner applies whatever information, behaviour patterns or value judgement he has learned to his real life situation. Since the learner is far apart from the context of the

text, he cannot apply and cannot even understand some forms of behaviour or thought.

The present study will attempt to demonstrate the effect of cultural content on reading comprehension which includes finding factual information, making inferences and evaluating the information contained in the text.

The specific areas that are tested are as the follows:

1. Are background information and reading comprehension related?
2. Can the learners of English coming from Eastern origin make inferences and evaluations on a Western culture based text as accurate as they do on a native culture based text?

3.2. Expectations

1. The learnes of English at this level (intermediate) are expected to have a better performance on the native culture based text because the information in the text matches the possessed schema of the learner. Thi seffect will be seen especially on the inference and evaluation levels of comparison.

2. The learnes of English coming from an Eastern origin are unlikely to make correct inferences and evaluations on a foreign culture based text as they make on a native culture based text because of the reason mentioned above.

3.3. Methodology

The method used in this experiment will be described in detail below. But, to summarise, thirty five students read two texts; a short story by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil (1934, see appendix A) and an extract from Bud Schulberg's 'What Makes Sammy Run?' (1978, see appendix B). The extract taken from 'What Makes Sammy Run?' was adopted a little to serve the purpose of the experiment taking various factors such as language difficulty, vocabulary colloquial terms and lenght into consideration. This adaptation was done with the supervision of my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Abdülhamit Çakır and Muhammed Adil, who is a native speaker of English. He is a teacher at Abdullah Aymaz İ.Ö.O. Some of the changes that were done are indicated below (The original text is given in appendix C.).

After the experiment was conducted, the data was collected, and the method of evaluation and the system of grading was discussed with Assist Prof. Dr. Ali Murat Sünbül. He is an instructer at Selçuk University at Faculty of Education at Department of Education Science and Psychological Services in Education.

1 Original Text:

The first time I saw him he couldn't have been much more than sixteen years old, **a little ferret of a kid, sharp and quick.** Sammy Glick. Used to run copy for me. **Always ran. Always looked thirsty.**

"Good morning, Mr. Manheim," he said to me first time we met, "I'm the new office boy, but **I ain't going to be** an office boy long."

"Don't say ain't," I said, "or you'll be an officeboy forever."

Adapted version (Paragraph 1)

The first time I saw him be couldn't have been much mo than sixteen years old, **sharp and quick as a ferret**. He used ta run copy for me.

"Good morning, Mr. Manheim," he said ta me the first time we met. "I'm the new office boy, but **I'm not gonna** be an office boy long.'

"Don't say gonna," I said, or you'll be an office boy forever."

2 Original Text

"Get the hell out of here," I answered.

Adapted Version (line I4)

"Now, go away," I said...

3 Original Text

After the second trip he would come back to me **panting**, like a **frantic,** puppy **retrieving** a ball.

Adapted Version (lines 27-28)

After the second trip be would come back to me breathing like an **excited** puppy **chasing** a ball.

4 Original Text

'If I still have it next year, it'll **stink**."

Adapted Version (line 4I)

"If I still have it next year, it'll **be boring**.'

5 Original Text

That was the first time he ever scared me. **Here I was going out of my way** to be nice to him and he answered me with a look that was almost **contemptuous.**

Adapted Version (lines 46-48)

That was the first time he ever scared me. **I was only trying to be nice to him** but he answered me with a look that was almost **attacking.**

Some of the parts in the original text that did not have very much importance in the flow of the story and did not hinder comprehension were omitted for the purpose of making the text of equal length with the native culture based text.

3.3.1. Texts

In order to select two texts which are more or less based on the same subject matter but contains different cultural norms, a large amount of time was devoted. This is the most difficult part of the research. Many textbooks and reading books were searched in order to find passages containing foreign cultural elements which were not very difficult. It is also very difficult to find a text with the same subject matter in the native culture. After the native culture based text was found, it must be translated into English. The translation was done with the supervision of my thesis supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Abdülhamit Çakır and Muhammed Adil who is an instructer at Abdullah Aymaz Secondary School. He is a native speaker. He was born in England and he grew up there-so his

second name is Eddy. Since he is a native speaker, he has also checked the translation of the native culture based text. It is a short story named "It Is Not a Story" by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil. For a story containing Western Culture, the first chapter of Bud Schulberg's book "What Makes Sammy Run" was choosen and it contained more or less the same subject matter.

In both thesis there is a young boy who is working to earn money for this family and who is doing his job perfectly and who is liked very much by the people around them. The short story by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil takes place in İstanbul and the extract taken from the first chapter of Bud Schulberg's "What Makes Sammy Run" (1978) takes place in Hollywood.

3.3.2. Development of Questions

Three kinds of questions are used in this experiment. Finding **factual** information, **making inferences** and **evaluations** forms the basis of the type of questions to be asked on the texts. In each text the number of questions related to each different section were kept equal. Related to each text, there are two questions requiring factual information, five questions requiring inference from the text and two questions related to reader's judgement. These two questions are evaluative questions. (The types of questions for each text are indicated in appendices A and B following the texts). An example of each type of question asked about the texts is given below:

Examples of the Types of Questions Following Each Text

Native Culture Based Text

Questions 1 (factual) :What is the most important problem of their little house?

Answer (lines 33-34) :The most important problem of their little house is the smell of mold that meets people in the small courtyard.

Questions 4 (inferential): Is Kemal a hardworking boy? Why?

Answer (paragraphs 4-6): Yes, he is a hardworking boy, because he works both in a barber and at his father's cafe. He also helps his mother to take Sabire to the graveyard. He looks after Sabire all the time.

Questions 9 (Evaluative): Who do you think the lady is? Or what kind of a relationship between the lady and this family before this?

Answer (whole text) :(The student has to read the whole text and get the gist of the story to make a judgement about this question). They may say that the lady is a woman who helps this family, or they may say the familly had have worked near this lady before this event.

Foreign Culture Based Text

Questions 7 (factual) : How was the writer's mistake with his article corrected?

Answer (line 93-94) :His mistake was corrected by Sammy. He read the article while running between desks and he saw the last paragraph and he wrote the verbs.

Question 2 (inferential) : Why does the writer think Sammy is smart?

Answer (lines 11-18) :Because Sammy is an intelligent, hardworking and a honest boy. He never tells a lie.

Question 9 (evaluative) :What do you think made Sammy run? Explain in your own words?

Answer (whole text) :The student has to get the gist of the text. Sammy wants to make a lot of money and becames rich as soon as possible.

3.3.3. Evaluation

Since all the questions required subjective answers and could not be objectively evaluated as being correct and incorrect each answer was labelled in three categories; **'full compherension (FC)', 'partial comprehension (PC)'**, and **'no comprehension (NC)'**. The following tables were used for the evaluation of different type of answers. **Tables**

1, 2, 3 represent the evaluation sheet for each student **'Q'** stands for question, **'pts'** for gained points. **Table 4** represents the scores of all the students on both texts.

Table 1. Evaluation of answers based on finding factual information

NAME	FINDING FACTUAL INFORMATION			
	Category	Q1	Q2	Total: 4 pts
	FC 2 pts. each	+		2
	PC 1 pts. each		+	1
	NC O			

1. 2 points for a full comprehension, 1 point for a partial comprehension makes a total of 3 points out of 4 on this section of the test.

Table 2. Evaluation of answers based on making inferences from the text

NAME	INFERENTIAL INFORMATION						
	Category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Total:20 pts
	FC 4 pts. each		+	+			8
	PC 2 pts. each	+			+		4
	NC O					+	0

2. 8 points for two full compherension and four poaints for two partial comprehension makes 12 points out of 20 for this section of the test.

Table 3. Evaluation of the answers based on evaluation the learner

NAME	EVALUTIVE INFORMATION			
	Category	Q1	Q2	Total: 16 pts
	FC 8 pts. each	+		8
	PC 4 pts. each			0
	NC O		+	0

3. Only a full comprehension in the section makes 8 points out of 16. Thus the total score of the student on the test is 3+12+8= 8 points out of 40.

In order to be able to calculate the mean scores (M) and standart deviation (SD) of the given answers to each section, the following tale was conducted.

Table 4. Evaluation of overall grades

	TEXT 1 (NATIVE)				TEXT 2 (FORIGN)			
N	FACTUAL INFO.	INFERENTIAL INFO.	EVALUATIVE INFO.	TOTAL	FACTUAL INFO.	INFERENTIAL INFO.	EVALUATIVE INFO.	TOTAL
S1	3	12	8	23	2	10	-	12
S2	4	14	8	26	2	8	4	14
S3	4	12	4	20	3	12	4	19
S4	2	14	16	32	4	10	4	18

M: SD:

3.3.4. Subjects

Thirty five students attending Konya Gazi High School participated as subjects in this experiment. These students are preparing for the university exam and they have been following an intensive programme in the EFL for four years. They've been having instruction in Eglish language. In their first year they went to preparatory class and later they' ve choosen English class at their third year. They have been preparing for the university exam for two years. They are at the intermediate level. The programme they've been following gives equal importance to all four skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking in language, but since their last year to prepare for the exam, they are giving the focus on grammar in those days.

3.3.5. Procedures

The experiment was conducted in two hour teaching sessions. The first hour (45 minutes) the subjects were given the native culture based text 'It Is Not A Story' (See Appendix A) by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil and the second hour they were given the foreign culture based text 'What Makes Sammy Run' (See Appendix B) by Bud Schulberg. No prereading activity or cultural orientation was done for the purpose of the experiment which was testing how much of the text the subjects would be able to comprehend with their existing background knowledge or schemata.

For each text they were instructed to read the story and answer the questions that followed. The questions following the texts required

more inference and evaluation than finding factual information from the text. So there was no need to refer back to the text while answering the questions, but the students couldn't help referring frequently back to the text looking for direct answer.

3.3.6. Method of Data Analysis

The answer given to different sections were evaluated according to the grading scales given in tables 1-4. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether there would be a significant difference between the comprehension of two texts. Thus, the answers given to each section were evaluated comparatively to determine the difference between the factual, inferential and evaluative comprehension of the two texts. So, for example the mean scores on inferential questions were compared to determine the difference in the mean scores of this section on both texts.

The data analysis consisted of several stages. At the first stage the overall mean scores and standart deviations were calculated for each different section of questions of each text. Then, a **t-test** was run to compare the mean scores of each section. The reason to run **a-test** was that the sample size very small and a t-test is the most widely used statistical test that can be used for the comparison of two means when dealing with small sizes. So in the descriptive analysis of the data mean scores and standard deviation, and in the comparative analysis independent t-test techniques were used.

3.4. Results and Their Interpretations

The abbrevations used in the tables are as follows:

Q: Number of questions NC: Native culture based

FQ: Factual questions FC: Foreign culture based

IQ: Inferential question Std: Standard

EQ: Evaluative question t: "t" value

N: Number of students p: Level of signifiance

Table 5. Comparison of the mean scores of the factual questions section of the two texts.

	TEXT	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Q:2	NC	35	3,4	0,65	1,119	0,267
FQ	FC	35	3,2	0,83		

When the mean scores of the subjects on factual questions of both texts were analysed, it was observed that the mean score of the native culture based text in this section is 3,4 ± 0,65, and the mean score of then foreign culture based text is 3,2 ± 0,83. Independent t-value calculated on the scores of the two texts is 1,119. This means that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students' answer on the factual questions for two texts.

The graphic figure shows the results of the mean scores of the section of the factual questions section of the two texts is below:

Figure 1

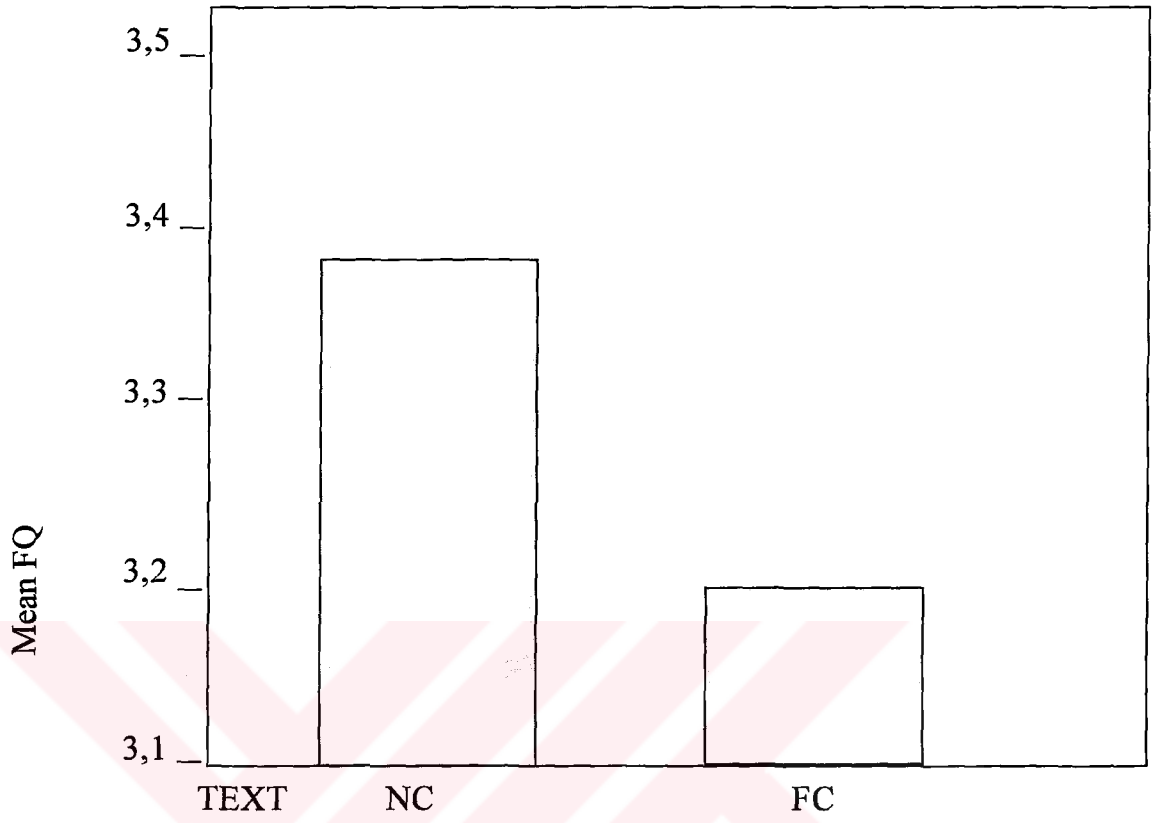


Table 6. Comprehension of the mean scores of the inferential questions section of the two texts.

	TEXT	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Q:5	NC	35	15,14	2,34	4,974	0,0001
IQ	FC	35	12,46	2,17		

From the analysis of the mean scores on the inferential questions it was observed that the mean score of the native culture based text in this section is 15,14±2,34, and the mean scores of the foreign culture based text is 12,46±2,17. Indepentent t-value between the texts was found as 4,974. This result shows a significant difference in the students'

performance. It is statistically significant. Thus, the students scored significally higher on the native culture based text.

The figure shows the results on the graphic is as follow:

Figure #

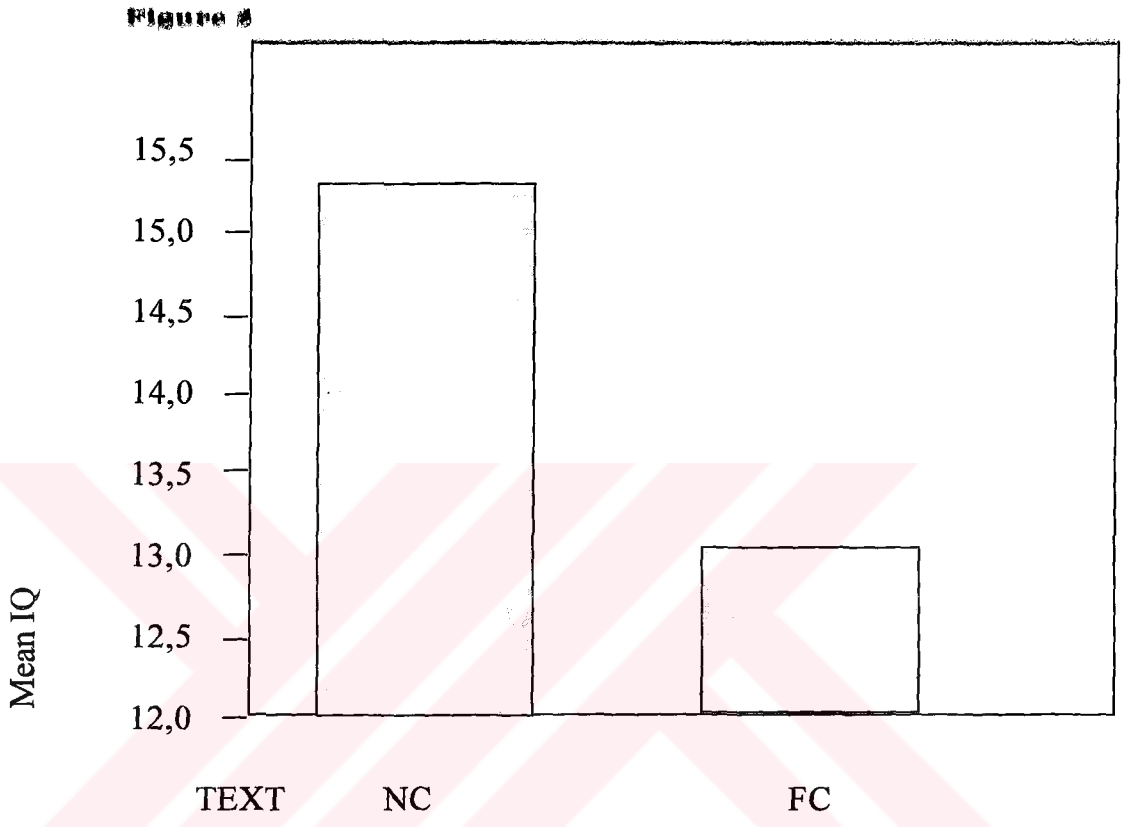


Table 7. Comprehension of the mean scores of the evaluative questions section of the two texts

	TEXT	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Q:2	NC	35	9,54	3,88	4,374	0,0001
EQ	FC	35	5,6	3,66		

The mean score of the native culture based text in the evaluative questions section was observed as 9.54±3,88 and the mean score of the foreign culture based text was observed as 5,6±3,66. Independent t-value between the texts was calculated as 4,374. Thus, the observed values prove that the difference between the mean scores gained on the two texts are significant on the level of 0,05. Although the students could not score as high as expected on the native culture based text, they scored significantly higher on the native culture based text than on the foreign culture based text.

The graphic figure shows the results is as follows:

Figure 3

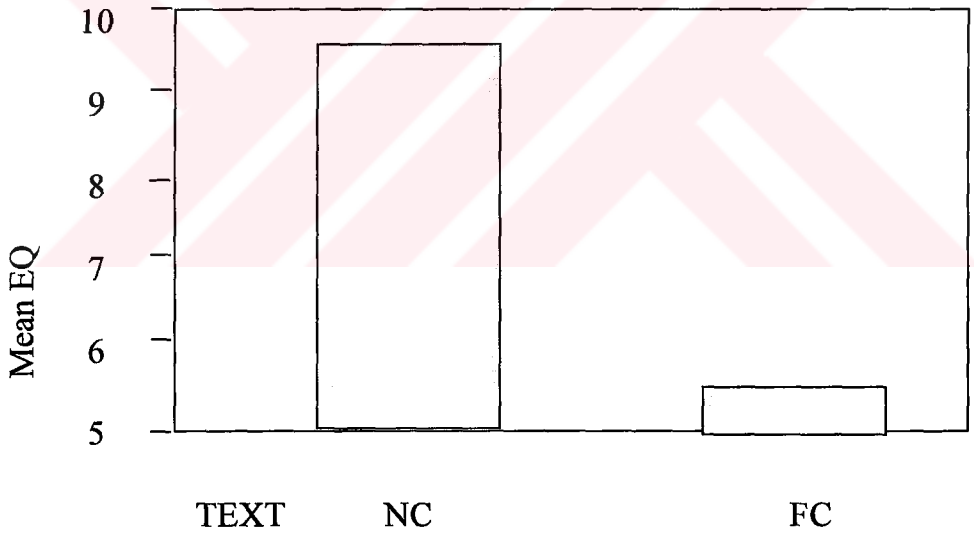


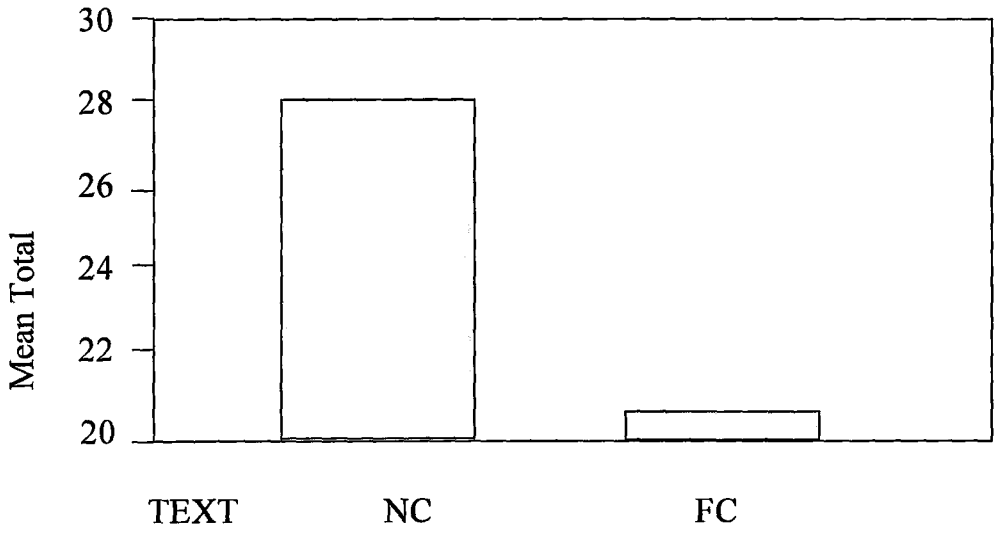
Table 8. Comparison of the mean scores of the overall scores of the two texts

	TEXT	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
TOTAL	NC	35	28,09	4,77	6,31	0
	FC	35	21,26	4,27		

When it is looked at the curve of the descriptive scores of the two texts, it was observed that the mean score of the overal scores of the native culture based text is 28,09±4,77; and the mean score of the overal scores of the foreign culture based text is 21,26±4,27. Thus, from the statistical analysis of the overall mean scores we can deduce that the difference between the overall comprehension of the two texts demonstrates great significance since the level of significance is very small (P<0,05). The participants' performance is significantly higher on the native culture based text than on the foreign culture based text.

The graphic figure which shows these results is as follow:

Figure 4



3.5. Discussion

The data analysis has shown that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the factual questions section of the two texts. All participants, no matter what cultural norms the text included, could answer factual questions requiring direct answers from the text. But the difference between their mean scores of the inferential and evaluative sections of the questions was very significant. However they had difficulty in making evaluations on the texts they read regardless of its cultural content. This might result from their educational background, since they are very much used to being asked factual questions but not to make evaluation on the text they read. Thus the data analysis has shown that the students could answer inferential questions and evaluative questions on the native culture based text better than those on the foreign culture based text. That is to say, they can make accurate inferences on native culture based texts, whereas, they are very poor in performance when inferential and evaluative questions are asked on a foreign culture based text. Therefore, we can conclude that real comprehension of a text is much related with its cultural content and the students' educational background.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The basic findings of this study may be summarized as follows. In the first part of this study it is stated through the related literature that language is a key component of culture. It is the primary medium for transmitting much of culture. Learning a second language also involves learning a second culture to varying degrees. Second prior background knowledge of culture-specific information presupposed by a text affects reading comprehension of that text. There is a relationship between the background knowledge that the students bring to the text and his/her ability to interpret it. Also some modes of presenting culture in class are explained in order to show that we could improve students' reading comprehension by helping them build background knowledge on a topic prior to reading particularly with culture specific background knowledge. In this section new ideas for presenting culture are proposed.

From the present research it is possible to extract several general implications for the EFL learners at the intermediate level. Foreign language learners at the intermadiate level who participated in this research tended to comprehend the native culture based text better than the foreign culture based text. Students were able to answer factual questions on both texts requiring direct answers from the text regardless of their cultural background. Eventhough they could not perform well on the questions related to making evaluations on either text they scored highly on the native culture based text. A significant discrimination on the overall mean scores of the two texts became the most obvious when

students attempted the inference questions. They scored much higher on the native culture based texts. These results imply that the learner of English may face problems when tackling tasks related to foreign culture based texts for which they have no or inadequate background knowledge. Therefore, it is an inevitable fact that culturally determined background of a text whether it is foreign or native to the readers has an effect on reading comprehension. When a text has a native cultural background, this effect is positive and it is negative when a text has a foreign cultural background that the students have no prior knowledge about it.

Since most students live in a monolingual and mŏnocultural environment, they are "culture bound." This place a heavy pedagogic responsibility on foreign language teacher to reduce their cultural biases towards the language s/he is teaching, and to lessen their antipathy towards other social behaviours. S/he should impress upon students that cultural differences do not necessarily involve moral issues of right or wrong. This bicultural understanding is essential to identify those areas of cultural background that will be unintelligible to his/her students if presented without explanation. The most essential component of introducing a cultural element in the classroom is that foreign language teachers must maintain complete neutrality. S/he must not give her/his students the impression that s/he is selling a foreign culture to them. His/her approach should be informative, analytical, and objective. Many researches have demonstrated that providing cultural background could increase students' success in the reading process since they can make inferences if they can comprehend the text exactly. However if the reading materials are heavily loaded with foreign culture at the first

stages of acquiring the necessary skills for reading, there might occur some theoretical and practical complications. And the learner can have a negative attitude towards reading and learning a foreign language. Thus, especially at early stages in order to assess language competence and familarize readers with other cultures text selections of foreign language curriculum should be based on concepts and contents which carry global references and represent real life domains that readers can easily grasp meaning as active participants and interpreters. They can discuss the daily life of target language community; their families, their friends, festivals,... etc. Also the goal of the foreign language instruction in institutions teaching English for academic purposes (EAP) should be development of reading skills of the learners with suitable reading material. In such cases language is better to be presented as free of cultural elements of the target language as possible. So the learners of English who view English as a key to success feel confident since they will realise that English is an international medium through which they can also express their own beliefs. In conclusion, the reading course in these situations should aim at facilitating reading through a method which is most suitable for the expectations and level of the foreign language learners. So although it is an inevitable fact that language and culture are inseperable, since a language expresses its culture, it seems reasonable at the beginning to give secondary importance to foreign culture and leave it to a later stage in the process of learning that language.

Finally the results of the researchs, conducted on this subject, have showed that the difficulty in getting the accurate meaning is related

to a lack of cultural schemata, rather than a lack of linguistic competence. This means that it is not enough for a person to understand the structure of a sentence to communicate; one must also know what s/he knows is contextually appropriate.

APPENDIX A NATIVE CULTURE BASED TEXT

IT IS NOT A STORY

In order to taste from this lady's conversations, which are witty, thoughtful, often full with profound philosophy and with an endless joyfulness, I often go and want a cup of tea herself. This evening I've found her sinking into her chair in sorrow contrary to joyfulness. She has just washed her tears.

This appearance was so contrary to her natural state that I urgently asked:

- What is the matter, please; is there any problem annoyed you?..

She sat up a little:

- At first, please sit down. There is some butter, bread and jam; make your tea. If you want, you can both eat and smoke. I'll tell after I feel well again.

Her words encouraged me to continue my question:

- So, there is a story that will be told, isn't there?

That time she sank into her chair again:

- Not a story.. .I am not a person who finds a subject and develops a story. There is only an event. This event, which is seen and

heard everyday and which fills hospitals' dormitories, poor sheds in which the hope of escaping from the illness is fed, is one of the tuberculous girl events!..

We should be accustomed to this event so much that it isn't necessary to be upset, to cry as if it was a special event, is it? But look, how I am sorry, how I am shocked with all my being. I was crying sobbingly, before you came.

I was crying for only a child, who is at the edge of death or perhaps, who is dead at the mornent. When you drink your tea, I'll tell the quality of this touching event...

She has spoken; so I am writing this event as she told:

There is a family; how much it is possible to be poor, so they are; how much it is possible to be little, so they are; but how much it is possible to be happy, so they are. . Isn't it necessary not to touch their happiness by showing respect to their poorness?

Fortune didn't think so, it didn't see happiness as a suitable thing for them. It has given the greatest calamity and disease to that miserable child.

How did I know this family, why am I interested in thern, why did I use to go Topkapı?..These are the detailes. Let's leave them and concentrate on the important things:

A house which is attached to the wall of an old castle and has three rooms.... One side of the room is leaning out towards the street and when you walk to that direction, it is shaking and trembling violently; but if you don't run to that direction, it isn't obvious...

The real problem is the roof. They always repair the roof and put patches made of old tinplate, but when it rains, they couldn't prevent rainwater from getting in the house; but the problem can be prevented by putting some plate,saucepan,basket...

The problem which is seen as impossible to prevent is the smell of mold that meets you in the small courtyard, which is furnished with the common Arnavut pavement, as soon as you get in from the outside. There is such a smell of dampness in the house that they find neither its source nor its remedy. They don't worry about the roof. Kemal always says that he has found a new remedy for that, after every repair.

Look, I've told neither about Kemal nor his family's other members. Thus, this is a proof of that I don't know the method of writing a story!.. But, since Kemal's name has been heard firstly, I'll tell something about him:

As I know he is sixteen years old now; he is blond, thin; his green eyes are surrounded with long eyelashes and he is a handsome child. He is so sweet and pure that all old people of the ward are always around him with the care and attention of a protecting group...

He is a very hardworking and intelligent boy. He is working as a barber in one of the corners of his father's cafe and the cafe is at their ward. It is far from the house for five or ten steps. His mother calls him from the window and Kemal answers from the cafe. After he was graduated from the primary school, he has been working as an apprentice for both his father and that barber. Then when the barber joined to the army, they saw no need for another barber. . . It is said that Kemal cuts

hair and beard of all ward and he gets the ward not to feel the absence of his craftsman.

Father, mother and Kemal! We've just come the real heroine of the story. This idiom of heroism is in fact an opposite thing for this story. She isn't a heroine, on the contrary, she is thin, emaciated and she is a fourteen years old girl who hides a deep secret pain in her big blue eyes, Sabire..

She is two years smaller than Kemal, if you see her, you say that there are four years between them at least. Why is that so? Why is the first one of these two children growing in health and strenght while the second one is going bad like a fruit grawn by a warm which hides in it? If you know these games of nature, you solve it by yourself. Anyway you've understood that the child is tuberculous. Her mother who doesn't confess it even to her seif, has also understood this fact.

One day in tears,she said me:

- Lady, I am afraid that the child is tuberculous!..

- That time I spoke about a thought, which is in my mind for a long time:

- Just once, I wish you would take her to Haseki Hospital...

.....

They spoke frankly and they said:

"- You should feed the child with milk, egg, fish, meat and you had better to give wine if it is possible... But the most important thing is

that you should get her outside to get air and sunlight. Has your house got a garden?"

Isn't the meaning of these words clear?

Certainly they didn't say the name of the illness, but it can be understood from the things to do. So you see that there is no any difference in the story. You may tell me a hundred of these tuberculous girls. But!..

The lady sighed here with a deep breath:

- But my story has a special feature; you've certainly understood. The little house doesn't have a garden, and there is no even a bit of sunlight which can enter from the windows. However, the weather of dark court is mold smelly and filled with dampness. A garden, the sunlight and the clean weather are the necessary things for the child. Finding these isn't a difficult job. These exist as much as you want in a place; there is a big, endless graveyard which is far from the little house. Great, large and cheerful graveyard...

Grazing lambs and goats; children playing leapfrog by jumping over gravestones; close ward families cooking something to eat, even delightful men who are coming with their flutes and violins in order to enjoy and to drink.. . Everybody gives liveliness and amusement to this place except deads.

So Kemal took his sister slowly away to that place without showing any hesitation, after he wrapped an old rug, a thin mattress, two or three pillows and a sheet in a blanket and taken this packet on his back. They've found a black shadow of a long and thick cypress and a

graveside where the sunlight will not be prevented. They've put the mattress there.

They've laid her down under the sun. A brilliance came to her eyes immediately and her face became colorful. She has started to spend long hours near her mother every day in order to gain her living abilities from this place of deads' empire by watching enjoying people and by not thinking of the death rotting in the grave on which she laid. So there is the sunlight and there is the clean weather...

The problem of food has been solved easier than everything. This problem was discussed in the cafe. All neighbours have learned this subject. Everyday Kemal is used to come with a filled basket by finding a short time between two clients' hair, he is used to give it to his mother and then he is used to return back to his work again by running.

Some neighbours have goats and chickens. Some of them have given milk and egg. Everyday the butcher of the ward has been sending her two grilled cutless anda pile of bone. When it comes to wine : I.. ..well .....

Anyway it isn't important. So everything has come right somehow. I went there and saw her twice.There was really a big progress towards improving. So I was hopeful too; I said her mother:

- You had better bring her to the hospital to the same doctor!..

She took her to the same doctor; after he had examined her for a long time, he showed displeasure and hc said:

"- Didn't you do the things I said?". After he had taken the answer, he said:

"- So continue to feed her much more. She should see the sun in warm hours"..

Today I've gone there again to see that poor girl once more. She wasn't lying; since she has difficulty in breathing, they've put the pillows on that big, old gravestone which bent one side of the grave as if it waited an opportunity in order to fall down. Her lips were narrow, her eyes were brightless. She smiled me but didn't say anything. Sometimes she had shaking her head slowly. I couldn't stay there much more. The result could be understood. I left rom there as if I had escaped. So you see...

When she came here she stopped, at that time the door was knocked.The servant came and said:

- A young person, came from Topkapı, wants to see you.

That time a blond, handsome chilLd entered. He was Kemal. He stopped there for a moment, then he spoke by gulping:

- Sabire died; two hours later after you had left... He stopped again and he talked:

- She wasn't able to walk recently. Our neighbours and friends had made something like a handborrow. I and one of my friends were bringing her to that place with it. She was like a bird. She had no weight anymore. Today we took her to the graveyard by the same way. The world of hope!..After you had left, a little blood came...

Kemal couldn't finish his words. While the lady was trying to hide her pain she asked:

"- When will they burry her?"

-"Tomorrow...in the morning!.." he was able to say. "- Where?"she asked.

By tremling he answered:

"-There is an empty place near the grave on which she Iied..."

A story by;

Halit Ziya UŞAKLIGİL

Translated by;

Esra KARATAŞ

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Factual 1. What is the most important problem of their little house?

Factual 2. Why does the lady say that the idiom of heroism is not suitable for Sabire?

Inferential 3. What is the oppositeness in the graveyard? (think this question on the account of Sabire)

Inferential 4. ls Kemal hardworking boy? why?

Inferential 5. What did Kemal mean by saying "the world of hope"?

Inferential 6. Why did Kemal answer the lady's question of the place that Sabire will be burried by trembling?

Inferential 7. Describe the character of Kemal's mother in a few sentences?

Evaluative 8. Sabire became worse in last two days, what do you think about the reason of this? Do you think it is a good idea getting her to the graveyard which reminds death?

Evaluative 9. Who do you think the lady is? or what kind of a relationship between the lady and this family before this?

APPEDIX B : FOREIGN CULTURE BASED TEXT

WNAT MAKES SAMMY RUM?

The first time I saw him he couldn't have been much more than sixteen years old, sharp and quick as e ferret. Sammy Glick. He used to run copy for me. "Good morning, Manheim," he said to me the first time we met. I'm the new office boy, but I'm not gonna be an office boy long.'

Don say gonna, 'I said, or you'll be an office boy for ever.

"Thanks, Mr. Manheim," he said, "that's why I took this job, so I can be around writers, and learn all about grammar and how to act right."

I told him be was very smart and he didn't do a bad job with his mouth, either. Smart kid, I thought. "Now, go away," I said and watched the thin wire-like body turn around the corner like an arrow. He made me feel guess I've always been afraid of people who think they are smart and try to prove it without considering other people's feelings.

The boss told ne Sammy was getting a three week try-out. But Sammy did more running around the office than Paavo Nurmi did in his whole career. Every time I handed him a page of copy, he ran off with it as if his life depended on it can see Sammy racing between the desks, his tie flying, wild-eyed, desperate.

After the second trip, he would come back to me breathing like an excited puppy chasing a ball. I never saw a guy working so hard for twelve buck a week in my life. He might not have been the most lovable kid in the world, but you knew he must have something. I used to stop in

the middle of a sentence and watch him go. "Hey, kid, take it easy." That like telling Niagara to fall more slowly.

"You said hurry, Mr. Manheim."

"I didn't ask you to drop dead on us."

"I don't drop dead very easy, Mr. Manheim."

"Like your job, Sammy"

"It's a good job - this year."

"What do you mean - this year?"

"If I still have it next year, it'il be boring."

He looked so tense and serious that I almost laugh in his face. I liked him. "I'll keep my ear to the ground for you, kid. Maybe in a couple of years I'll have the chance to take you in as a cub reporter."

That's the first time be ever scared me. I was only trying, to be nice-to him but he answered me with a look that was almost attacking.

"Thanks, Hr. Manheim" he said, "but don't do me any favours. I know this newspaper racket. Couple of years as a cub reporter. Twenty bucks. Then another job as district man. Twenty five. And finally, you are a great big reporter and forty five for the rest of your life. No, thanks." Well, I guess he know what he was doing. The world was a race to Sammy. He was running against time. Then, I began to wonder if I would ever try to do another job and decided if it is a race, Al Manheim does not choose to run. Then the thought what makes Sammy run started running through my head.

"What makes Sammy run?"

Once, while we were sitting in a bar I asked Henry:

"Hey, Henry, what makes Sammy run?" What are you talking about, Al?"

"I'm talking about Sammy Glick , that's who I am talking about. What makes Sammy run?

"You're drunk, Al! "Don't you try to get out of it! That's an important questian. What makes Sammy run?" Henry wiped his sweaty forehead with his sleeve.

"Jesus, Al, how should I know?"

"But I've got to know (I was shouting by this time). It's the answer to everything." But Henry didn't seem to see.

Next morning I heard O'Brien, the managing editor, shouting from his office.

"Why don't you look what you are doing, Manheim?"

The best I could do at the moment was, "What's bothering you?"

"Nothing is bothering me". he screamed, "But I don't know what's bothering you –worms - in your brain? Maybe you didn't read the column over before you filed it last night." As a matter of fact I hadn't been able to see my column, so I simply asked, "Why, was something wrong with it?"

"Nothing much. Just one slight omission. You left all of the verbs out of the last paragraph. If it hadn't been for that kid Sammy Glick it would have run the way you wrote it."

"What has it got to do with Sammy?"

"Everything. He read it on his way to the desk..." "Glick read it?" I shouted.

"Shut up," he said, "he read it on his way to the desk and when he saw that last paragraph he sat down and rewrote it himself. And, he did a good job, too.'

"That's fine," I said, "he is a great kid. I'll have to thank him."

A few minutes later we came face to face with that clever, good Samuel Glick. "Nice work, Sammy," I said.

"Oh, that's all right, old man," he said.

It was the first time he had ever called me anything but Mr. Manheim. That was just the beginning.

"Don't you think it's dangerous to drop so many verbs?" he asked. "You might hit somebody down below."

"Listen," said, "Tell me one thing. Now can you read when you're running so fast?'

"That's how I learned to read, "he cracked, "on the way to do something for someone else."

I felt sorry for the kid. He was probably right. Somebody in the office called him. He spun around and started running. What makes Sammy run? I thought, looking after him, what makes Sammy run?

Bud Schulberg (1978)

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Inferential 1. Where does Sammy work as an office boy?

Inferential 2.Why does the writer think Sammy is smart?

Inferential 3. How did Sammy do his job?

Inferential 4. Does Sammy intend to work as an office boy for a long time? Why?

Inferential 5. Does Sammy want to become a reporter? Why?

Factual 6. What was the mistake that the writer did with his article?

Factual 7. How was his mistake corrected?

Evaluative 8. Sammy calls the writer o1d man' after he corrects his mistake. Is what he is doing right? Why?

Evaluative 9. What do you think made Sammy run? Exp1air in your own words.

APPENDIX C FOREIGN CULTURE BASED TEXT (THE ORIGINAL VERSION)

Chapter One

THE FIRST time I saw him he couldn't have been much more than sixteen years old, a little ferret of a kid, sharp and quick. Sammy Glick. Used to run copy for me. Always ran. Always looked thirsty.

"Good morning, Mr. Manheim," he said to me the first time we met, "I'm the new a boy, but I ain't going to be an office boy long.»

"Don't say ain't," I said, "or you'll be an office boy for ever."

"Thanks, Mr. Manheim,"he said, "that's why I took this job, so I can be around writers and learn all about grammar and how to act right."

Nine out of ten times I wouldn't have even looked up, but there was something about the kid's voice that got me. It must have been charged with a couple of thousand volts.

"So you're a pretty smart little feller," I said.

"Oh, I keep my ears and eyes open," he said.

"You don't do a bad job with your mouth either," I said.

"I wondered if newspapermen always wisecrack the way they do in the movies," he said.

"Get the hell out of here," I answered.

He raced out, too quickly, a little ferret. Smart kid, I thought. Smart little kid. He made me uneasy. That sharp, neat, eager little face. I watched the thin, wiry body dart around the corner in high gear. It made

me uncomfortable. I guess I've always been afraid of people who can be agile without grace.

The boss told me Sammy was getting a three-week tryout. But Sammy did more running around that office in those three weeks than Paavo Nurmi did in his whole career. Every time I handed him a page of copy, he ran of with it as if his life depended on it. I can still see Sammy racing between the desks, his tie flying, wild-eyed, desperate.

After the second trip he would come back to me panting, like a franting puppy retrieving a ball. I never saw a guy work so hard for twelve bucks a week in my life. You had to hand it to him. He might not have been the most lovable little child in the world, but you knew he must have something. I used to stop in the middle of a sentence and watch him go. "Hey, kid, take it easy."

That was like cautioning Niagara to fall more slowly.

"You said rush, Mr. Manheim."

"I didn't ask you to drop dead on us."

"I don't drop dead very easy, Mr. Manheim.."

"Like your job, Sammy?"

"It's a damn good job-this year."

"What do you mean-this year?"

"If I still have it next year, it'll stink."

He looked so tense and serious I almost laughed in his face. I liked him. Maybe he was a little too fresh, but he was quite a boy.

"I'll keep my ear to the ground for you, kid. Maybe in a couple of years I'll have a chance to slip you in as a cub reporter."

That was the first time he ever scared me. Here I was going out of my way to be nice to him and he answered me with a look that was almost contemptious.

"Thanks, Mr. Manheim," he said, "but don't do me any favors. I know this newspaper racket. Couple of years as cub reporter? Twenty bucks. Then another stretch as district man. Thirty-five. And finally you're a great big reporter and get forty-five for the rest of your life. No, thanks."

I just stood there looking at him, staggered. Then.....

"Hey, boy!" And he's off again, breaking the indoor record for the hundred-yard dash.

Well, I guess he knew what he was doing. The world was a race to Sammy. He was running against time. Sometimes I used to sit at the bar at Bleeck's, stare at the reflection in my highball glass and say, "Al, I don't give a goddam if you never move your glass off this seat again. If you never write another line. I default. If it's a race, you can scratch my name right now. Al Manheim does not choose to run." And then it would start running through my head: What makes Sammy run? *What makes Sammy run?* I would take another drink, and ask one of the bartenders:

"Say, Henry, what makes Sammy run?"

"What the hell are you talking about, Al?"

"I'm talking about Sammy Glick, that's who I'm talking about. What makes Sammy run?"

"You're drunk, Al. Your teeth are swimming."

"Goddam it, don't try to get out of it! That's an important question. Now, Henry as man to man, What makes Sammy run?"

Henry wiped his sweaty forehead with his sleeve. "Jesus, Al, how the hell should I know?"

"But I've got to know. (1 was yelling by this time.) Don't you see, it's the answer to everything."

But Henry didn't seem to see.

"Mr. Manheim, you're nuts," be said sympathetically.

"It's driving me nuts," I said. "I guess it's something for Karl Marx or Einstein or a Big Brain; it's too deep for me."

"For Chri'sake, Al," Henry pleaded, "you better have another drink." I guess I took Henry's advice, because this time I got back to the office with an awful load on. I had to bat out my column on what seemed like six typewriters at the same time. And strangely enough that's how I had my first run-in with Sammy Glick.

Next morning a tornado twisted through the office. It began in the office of O'Brien the managing editor and it headed straight for the desk of the drama editor, which was me.

"Why in hell don't you look what you're doing, Manheim?" O'Brien yelled.

The best I could do on the spur of the moment was:

"What's eating you?"

"Nothing's eating me," he screamed. "But I know what's eating you-maggots-in your brain. Maybe you didn't read your column over before you filed it last night?"

As a matter of fact I hadn't even been able to see my column. And at best I was always on the Milqueroast side. So I simply asked meakly, "Why, was something wrong with it?"

"Nothing much," he sneered in that terrible voice managing editors always manage to cutivate. "Just one slight omission. You left all the verbs out of the last paragraph. If it hadn't been for that kid Sammy Glick it would have run the way you wrote it."

"What's Sammy Glick got to do with it?" I demanded, getting sore.

"Everything," said the managing editor. "He read it on his way down to the desk. . ."

"Glick read it?" I shouted.

"Shut up," he said. "He read it on his way to the desk, and when he saw that last paragraph he sat right down and rewrote it himseif. And damn well, too."

"That's fine," I said. "He's a great kid. I'll have to thank him."

"I thanked him in the only language he understands," the editor said, "with a pair for the Sharkey-Carnera scrap. And in your name."

A few minutes later I came face to face with that good Samaritan Samuel Glick himself.

"Nice work, Sammy," I said.

"Oh, that's all right, old man," he said.

It was the first time he had ever called me anything but Mr. Manheim.

"Listen, wise guy," I said, "if you found something wrong with my stuff, why didn't you come and tell me? You always know where I am."

"Sure I did," he said, "but I didn't think we had time."

"But you just had time to show it to the managing editor first," I said. "Smart boy."

"Gee, Mr. Manheim," he said, "I'm sorry. I just wanted to help you."

"You helped me," I said. "The way Flit helps flies."

Ever since Sammy started working four or five months back he had done a fairly conscientious job of sucking around me. He hardly ever let a day go by without telling me how much he liked my column, and of course I'd be flattered and give him pointers here and there on his grammar, or what to read, or sometimes I'd slip him a couple of tickets for a show and we'd talk it over and I'd find myself listening to him give out with Glick on the Theater. Anyway, he had played me for a good thing and always treated me with as much respect as a fresh kid like that could, but right here, as I watched that face, I actually felt I could see it change. The city editor hadn't hung a medal on his chest but he had put a

glint in Sammy's eye. You could see he was so gaga about his success that he didn't care how sore I was. That was the beginning.

"Don't you think it's dangerous to drop so many verbs?" he asked. "You might hit somebody down below."

"Listen," I said, "tell me one thing. How the hell can you read when you're running so fast?"

"That's how I learned to read," he cracked, "while I was running so fast. Errands."

It made me sore. He was probably right. Somebody called him and he spun around and started running. What makes Sammy run? I pondered, looking after him, what makes Sammy run?

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