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The Use of Language Learning Strategies in Course Books

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Abstract

Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are some kind of techniques that help students with learning a second or foreign language. Green and Oxford (1995) defines language learning strategies as specific actions or techniques that students use, often intentionally, to improve their progress in developing second language skills. LLS became the subject matter in the field of language learning in 1970s, and it has been understood that Language Learning Strategies have a crucial role in the language learning and teaching process. Course books are one of the most important teaching materials in language classrooms and they play an important role to apply language learning strategies to the classroom activities. This study aims to investigate the use of language learning strategies in the English language course books in Turkey. 2nd to 8th grade course books have been chosen from state schools and language learning strategies used in the course books have been defined according to Chamot and O'Malley's language learning strategy classifications. The study is intended to provide answers to the following questions: Which language learning strategies are used in the English language course books in primary and secondary schools? Are there any differences between the language course books as for the strategy use.

Key Words: Language Learning Strategies - Young Learners - EFL
Teaching/Learning- Course books

Introduction

Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are some kind of techniques that help students with learning a second or foreign language. Green and Oxford (1995) defines language learning strategies as specific actions or techniques that students use, often intentionally, to improve their progress in developing second language skills. Language learning strategies became the subject matter in the field of language learning in 1970s, and it has been understood that Language Learning Strategies have a crucial role in the language learning and teaching process. As Oxford (1986) states LLS improve language performance, encourage learner autonomy, and expand the role of the teacher in useful ways. Also, Rubin (1975) indicated that if instructors knew successful language learners' strategies, they could help less successful learners. As European countries studies about LLS have gained popularity in

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recent years in Turkey. For example, In Turkey, Hismanoglu (2000) investigated the ideas of different researchers about Language Learning Strategies and he evaluated all the classifications based on the variables such as gender, and class. Also, Alptekin (2007) investigated whether there were differences while choosing a Language Learning Strategy and what was the frequency of the strategies while learning two foreign languages in a formal and an informal language learning environment.

There have been many classifications by various field researchers depending on variables. For example, Oxford (1986) divides LLS into two groups; Direct and Indirect Strategies. Also, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) classifies LLS as Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, and Social and Affective Strategies. Classroom materials form an important part of language learning and teaching process. Course books are one of the most important teaching materials in language classrooms. According to McGrath (2006) course books are key element in language teaching and learning and also states that " course books will tend to dictate what is taught, in what order and, to some extent, how as well as what learners learn." Also course books play an important role to apply language learning strategies to the classroom activities. LLS are used in the course books explicitly or implicitly.

This study aims to investigate the use of language learning strategies in the English language course books in Turkey. 2nd to 8th grade course books have been chosen from state schools and language learning strategies used in the course books have been defined according to Chamot and O'Malley's language learning strategy classifications.

The study is intended to provide answers to the following questions: Which language learning strategies are used in the English language course books in primary and secondary schools? Are there any differences between the language course books as for the strategy use?

Methodology

In this study, English language course books used in the 2015-2016 academic year in public schools in Turkey have been chosen to determine their language learning strategy. Instructions in the units have been examined according to O'Malley and Chamot's LLS classifications.

Table 1. LLS Classification of O'Malley and Chamot

Metacognitive Strategies	Cognitive Strategies	Social and Affective Strategies
Planning	Repetition	Questioning for
Advance Organization	Resourcing	Clarification
	Grouping	Cooperation
Organizational Planning	Note Taking	Self-talk
Directed Attention	Deduction/Induction	Self-
Selective Attention	Substittion	reinforcement
Self-management	Elaboration	
Self-monitoring	Personal	
	Elaboration	
Comprehension Monitoring	World Elaboration	
Production Monitoring	Academic	
Auditory Monitoring	Elaboration	
	Between Parts	
Visual Monitoring	Elaboration	
Style Monitoring	Questioning	
Strategy Monitoring	Elaboration	
Plan Monitoring	Self-evaluative	
Double-check Monitoring	Elaboration	
Problem Identification	Creative	

Self-evaluation		Elaboration
Production Evaluation		Imagery
Performance Evaluation		Summerization
Ability Evaluation		Translation
Strategy Evaluation		Transfer
Language Evaluation	Repertoire	Inference

Turkish education system 2, 3. and 4 classes are primary school classes and 5, 6, 7. and 8. classes are secondary school classes. 2 to 6 grade curriculum was designed according to A1 descriptors also 7 and 8 grade curriculum was designed according to A2 descriptors .

Table 2. LLS Strategies in 2nd Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Selective Attention	12	7.9
Production Evaluation	12	7.9
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Repetition	35	23
Grouping	9	5,9
Personal Elaboration	17	11.1
World Elaboration	7	4,6
Imagery	51	33.5
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	9	5,9

As presented in Table 2 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 15.8 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 78.1 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 5.9 in second class course book. According to this result Cognitive Strategies are mostly used in second class course book.

Table 3. LLS Strategies in 3rd Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Selective Attention	77	23.1
Production Evaluation	43	12.9
Language Repertoire Evaluation	3	0.9
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Repetition	22	6.6
Grouping	14	4.2
Personal Elaboration	24	7.2
World Elaboration	7	2.1
Imagery	121	36.4
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	21	6.3

As presented in Table 3 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 36.9 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 56.5 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 6.3 in third class course book. According to this result Cognitive Strategies are mostly used in third class course book.

Table 4. LLS Strategies in 4th Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Selective Attention	37	15
Production Evaluation	40	15.1
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Repetition	24	9
Grouping	21	7.9
Note Taking	16	6
Personal Elaboration	11	4.1
World Elaboration	20	7.5
Imagery	67	25.3
Inference	5	1.9
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	23	8.7

As presented in Table 4 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 30.1 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 61.7 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 8.7 in fourth class course book. According to this result Cognitive Strategies are mostly used in fourth class course book.

Table 5. LLS Strategies in 5th Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Advance Organization	5	1.6
Selective Attention	35	11.5
Production Evaluation	101	33.4
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Resourcing	2	0.6
Repetition	3	1
Grouping	12	4
Note Taking	15	4.9
Personal Elaboration	19	6.2
World Elaboration	10	3.3
Imagery	45	14.9
Inference	15	4.9
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	40	13.2

As presented in Table 5 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 46.5 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 39.8 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 13.2 in fifth class course book. According to this result Metacognitive Strategies are mostly used in fifth class course book.

Table 6. LLS Strategies in 6th Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Advance Organization	11	3.6
Selective Attention	46	15.3
Production Evaluation	80	26.7
Language Repertoire Evaluation	1	0.3

2) Cognitive Strategies		
Resourcing	1	0.3
Repetition	3	1
Grouping	6	2
Note Taking	21	7
Personal Elaboration	17	5.7
World Elaboration	12	4
Imagery	37	12.3
Inference	17	5.7
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	47	15.7

As presented in Table 6 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 45.9 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 38 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 15.7 in sixth class course book. According to this result Metacognitive Strategies are mostly used in sixth class course book.

Table 7. LLS Strategies in 7th Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Advance Organization	10	2.5
Organizational Planning	14	3.6
Selective Attention	68	17.6
Production Evaluation	115	29.8
Language Repertoire Evaluation	23	5.9
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Resourcing	4	1
Repetition	1	0.2
Grouping	15	3.9
Note Taking	13	3.3
Personal Elaboration	12	3.1
World Elaboration	17	4.4
Imagery	44	11.4
Inference	24	6.2
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	25	6.4

As presented in Table 7 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 59.4 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 33.5 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 6.4 in seventh class course book. According to this result Metacognitive Strategies are mostly used in seventh class course book.

Table 8. LLS Strategies in 8th Class Course Book

	f	%
1) Metacognitive Strategies		
Advance Organization	29	6,7
Organizational Planning	19	4,4
Selective Attention	57	13,1
Production Evaluation	81	18,7
Language Repertoire Evaluation	2	0,4
2) Cognitive Strategies		
Resourcing	10	2,3
Repetition	9	2
Grouping	10	2,3
Note Taking	30	6,9
Substitution	3	0,7
Personal Elaboration	34	7,8

World Elaboration	15	3,4
Imagery	24	5,5
Inference	25	5,7
3) Social And Affective strategies		
Cooperation	84	19,4

As presented in Table 8 percentage of Metacognitive Strategy use is 43.3 and percentage of Cognitive Strategy use is 36.4 and also percentage of Social and Affective Strategy use is 19.4 in eighth class course book. According to this result Metacognitive Strategies are mostly used in eighth class course book.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to find out the LLS use of language learning strategies in the English language course books. The results of the findings show that in primary school course books Cognitive Strategies are mostly used; however, in secondary school course books Metacognitive Strategies are mostly used; moreover, both primary and secondary school course books Social and Affective Strategies are used least.

In the light of the results, it can be said that in the course books strategy diversity increased when grade level increase for example, in second class course books eight different strategies are used; however, in the eight grade course books fifteen different strategies are used.

The above tables indicate that publishers have an impact on strategy use in course books for example, sixth and eight class course books are published by the same publisher and *Personal Elaboration Strategy* is used more than *World Elaboration Strategy* but seventh grade course book is published by different publisher and *World Elaboration Strategy* is used more than *Personal Elaboration Strategy*.

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