



## The Effect of Texts about Turkish and American Cultures on Reading Comprehension Level of Primary School Students

### Türk - Amerikan Kültürü İçerikli Metinlerin İlköğretim Öğrencilerinin Okuduğunu Anlama Düzeyine Etkisinin İncelenmesi

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**ABSTRACT:** This research is a descriptive study, which aims at analyzing the effects of texts about Turkish and American cultures on reading comprehension level of primary school students. The experimental group was composed of 103 students. Within the scope of the study, the Reading Comprehension Scale was used to collect data and the answers given to the questions by the students were analyzed by three raters using a common scoring rubric. In the analysis of data collected within the scope of the study, one sample t-test was used in comparing the reading comprehension level on the basis of culture. An independent t-test and Mann Whitney U test were used to compare student success according to gender factor. In the light of the consequences of this research, reading comprehension level for the texts did not vary according to gender, the cultural elements and according to text type.

**Keywords:** reading comprehension, culture, gender, text type

**ÖZ:** Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerin ilköğretim öğrencilerinin okuduğunu anlama düzeyine etkisini incelemeyi amaçlayan bu araştırma betimsel bir çalışmadır. Araştırma grubu 103 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında veri toplamak için okuduğunu anlama ölçeği kullanılmış, öğrencilerin sorulara verdiği yanıtlar dereceli puanlama anahtarı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırma kapsamında toplanan verilerin analizinde; öğrencilerin okuduğunu anlama düzeyinin kültüre göre karşılaştırmasında tek örneklemlili t-testi, öğrenci başarısının cinsiyete göre karşılaştırılmasında ilişkisiz t-testi ile Mann Whitney U testi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre; Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde okuduğunu anlama düzeyi cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir ve metinlerdeki kültür öğeleri öğrencilerin aşına olduğu gündelik kavramlarda farklılık yaratmazken yaşantıları yoluyla deneyimledikleri dolaylı fikirler sebebiyle okuduğunu anlama oranının düştüğü biçimde yorumlanmıştır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** okuduğunu anlama, kültür, cinsiyet, metin türü

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension first started with the symbolic discovery of reading in civilizations such as the Sumerians, the Babylonians and the Mayans. If we make an analogical comparison, it can be stated that reading comprehension is a concept, which can be transferred by undergoing a transformation from one generation to another in billions of years. Research studies in the field of reading comprehension show that according to the tests of language skills such as phonological awareness, rapid naming and vocabulary and reading skills such as word recognition, spelling and reading comprehension particularly on identical and fraternal twins, substantial genetic influence was found on writing measures, writing samples, handwriting copy and all of the language and reading measures (Olson et al.,2012). On the other hand, analyses on 1,401 twin pairs in kindergarten and 1,285 twin pairs in first grade point out environmental and economic effects besides genetic ones (Taylor and Schatschneider, 2012). All other studies on twins reveal that environmental influences account for associations among word recognition, listening comprehension, vocabulary and reading comprehension. However, while there are no residual genetic or environmental influences on reading comprehension, the findings provide evidence for a genetic basis to the "Simple View" of reading (Harlaar et al.,2012).

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This study is addressed to hyperlexic children who learn to read at a very early age but cannot understand anything from what they read.

Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding a text. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text (Wikipedia, 2012). While Rosenblatt argues “The reader draws on past experience of life and language to elicit meaning from the printed words and thereby reorganizes past experience to attain new understanding,” (1982, p.268), Goodman states “Reading, as a Psycholinguistic Guessing Game, involves an interaction between thought and language. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time.” (1967, p. 127). Readers anticipate or make deductions on the basis of their pre-existing mental schemata or prior knowledge. If the mental schema of a reader is consistent with the input, then reading comprehension occurs. Readers comprehend what they read by personalizing it on the basis of their prior knowledge. (Pan, 2005, p. 17-25). For instance, Özenici (2007) notes that in foreign language courses education based on the schema theory contributes to the level of reading comprehension to a large extent.

According to The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study [PIRLS] results, Turkey’s reading achievement scale score is 51 points lower than the international average and PIRLS results are also parallel with the national results from The Education, Research and Development Directorate of the Ministry of National Education [EARGED] (PIRLS, 2001, 33). In Öğretmen’s PhD thesis (2006, p. 109-111), it was pointed out in consequence of the analyses carried out by means of examining the reading passages applied to the sample groups in the United States and Turkey within the scope of PIRLS 2001 Student Achievement in Reading Test that 53 out of 98 passage based reading questions involve differential item functioning (DIF). The fact that our country ranks 28th among 35 participatory countries according to the PIRLS 2001 International Report is highly controversial in terms of reflecting the reality. Borst (2004) addresses that cultural background – specifically country of origin – has pervasive influence on reading recall and different schemata may also influence readers’ recall.

Durkin’s (1978- 1979) findings on his research about reading comprehension instruction show that there was almost no comprehension instruction in the classrooms she observed, comprehension assessment, carried on for the most part through interrogation, was common, the concern was to see whether children’s answers were right or wrong rather than the comprehension and the teachers neglected comprehension because they were too busy teaching phonics, structural analysis, or word meanings. Gürsoy highlights “Teachers’ role in comprehension instruction has greatly changed. In reading process, teacher and student have been like two close friends who respect each other. Making children develop the skill of reading not only national classics but also world’s classics by internalizing, understanding them and analyzing and thinking on the characters involved should be an inseparable part of education.” (2012, p. 34-36).

This study, which aims at analyzing the effects of texts about Turkish and American cultures on reading comprehension level of primary school students, is of vital importance in revealing how culture-based texts are interpreted in terms of the level of comprehension and its possible contribution to the literature. In the study, answers were sought for the following questions:

1. What is the reading comprehension level according to text type (narrative – informative) for texts about Turkish and American cultures?
2. Does the reading comprehension level change to a great extent with regard to gender?

## 2. METHOD

This study is a descriptive one since it addresses the level of reading comprehension in terms of different variables and describes the existing situation.

### 2.1. Participants

#### 2.2.1. Characteristics of the participants

In this research, data were collected through simple random sampling method from third and fourth grade students of a private school located in Ankara Province in May 2010. Experimental group was composed of 103 students. 38 of them were third graders, 18 of which were females and 20 of which were males and 65 of them were fourth graders, 33 of which were females and 32 of which were males.

#### 2.2. Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument used within the scope of this study was Reading Comprehension Scale which was prepared by the researcher to assess the students' reading comprehension level and is composed of informative and narrative texts. The Reading Comprehension Scale is composed of eight different texts prepared for third and fourth graders. Half of the texts are about Turkish culture, whereas the other half are about American culture. Narrative texts include 13 open-ended questions while informative ones include 10 open-ended questions.

Akyol notes "Asking students questions about texts and making them repeat what they know by heart does not help them develop skills such as learning by understanding, critical thinking, answering questions through interpretation and so forth. That is why children should be asked questions which will help them think critically" (2001, p.169). Akyol (1994) classifies questions' analysis into three stages: the first stage is based on the source of information (intratextual, extratextual and intertextual) which will help the reader answer the questions, the second stage embodies questions aiming at activating cognitive processes (recall, interpretation and evaluation) and the third stage includes gradual distribution which is composed of questions to be answered before, in the course of and after reading and text type. In this study, reading comprehension questions were prepared on the basis of Akyol's classification technique.

Güneş points out "The best method to assess the comprehensibility of texts is to ask questions regarding the content of texts and reading comprehension level could be determined by using two types of texts namely narrative and informative and calculating their average" (2009, p. 36-37). Although scoring open-ended questions is subjective and time-consuming, it is used not only in tests prepared by teachers but also in large scale tests (Demirtaşlı, 2012, 29). "Assessment Form for Narrative and Informative Text Types' Structures" was used in order to assess the structural characteristics of text types used in this study (Sulak, 2009). Students were graded out of 100 and an expert was consulted in order to assign point values to questions.

Texts' readability and their contents concerning culture gaps were examined by experts. Readability means setting the difficulty level of texts and making sure they are compatible with the level of the students (Erdem, 2011, 27). Text difficulty is a process composed of four substantial parameters namely sentence length, number of the different words used in sentences, readability and comprehensibility levels of the words in texts and text clarity or including implications (Berberoğlu and Tuncer, 2009, 11). Besides quantitative characteristics such word lengths in texts and number of syllables, usage of those words, their recognition level, their being based on prior knowledge and student's reading level affect comprehensibility (Toz, 2011, 1). According to Klare, there are three generally accepted approaches in the literature for the definition and classification of reading levels of texts. These are expert opinion, close readability procedure and readability formulas. In expert opinion technique, texts are examined in terms of

characteristics such as sentence characteristics, word characteristics, content knowledge, etc. and are classified by experts in the field of reading according to the extent they are relevant for the target group (1963, cit. Çetinkaya, 2010, 15). Names and contents with regard to cultural differences of the texts, levels of the classes and number of the questions are shown in the following table.

**Table 1: Characteristics of the Texts and Number of the Questions Used in the Study**

Texts	Culture	Class Level	Narrative	Informative	Number Of The Questions
We Are Learning Nature Sports	American	3		✓	10
Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek? (What do Traditions and Customs Mean?)	Turkish	3	✓	✓	10
Sealed	American	3			13
Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri (Thorns of the Rose Street)	Turkish	3	✓		13
Cochise	American	4		✓	10
Atatürk'ün Gençliği (Youth of Atatürk)	Turkish	4		✓	10
White Fang	American	4	✓		13
Yüz Tümenlik Banknot (A Ten-Thousand Banknote)	Asia	4	✓		13

### 2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Before the research, permission was obtained from the school where the research would be carried out and information notes were sent to the parents of the students. The reading comprehension tests were given to the students under the supervision of their class teachers in predetermined classes by giving them enough time to answer all the questions. A model test was given on an individual basis to Turkish and American students an expert in the field. As a result of these model tests, a consensus was achieved that some of the reading texts should be revised. As a result, texts were revised and rearranged whereas no change were made to the questions.

The reading comprehension level of the students was assessed by three different raters experienced in classroom teaching and able to read handwriting. In this study, the average of the scores by three raters was taken in scoring of eight different texts prepared for third and fourth graders. Score reliability of the three raters was measured through the intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC). In other words, data collected through the scoring rubric were used in measuring the reliability of the scores (Kutlu, Doğan and Karakaya, 2009, 86). In this study, students' answers to the questions were analyzed through analytic scoring rubric (Kutlu, Doğan and Karakaya, 2009, 61). In consequence of the analysis, the reliability coefficient was estimated separately for each text. Score reliability coefficients ranged between 0.92 and 0.99. The coefficients reveal high inter-rater consistency. Below, there is an example of utilized in the study.

**Table 2: Analytic Scoring Rubric for the Fifth Question of the Text Named Atatürk'ün Gençliği (Youth of Atatürk)**

**Question No. 5: What are the important points related to the main theme of the text? [Assigned point value when scored out of 100: 15]**

<b>Answer Recognition Codes</b>		
<b>Codes</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Scores</b>
<small>(Codes invented by raters according to the students' answers about what they understand from the texts)</small>		
15	The Best Answer The greatest numbers of points given related to the main theme of the text are ones from Atatürk's birth to his youth and the one is the schools where he studied.	10
15	The schools where Atatürk studied and his family members	10
78	If you really want to do something and have suitable qualifications, you will do it.	
78	Atatürk is hardworking and he sets goals.	
76	Distant Correct Answers Atatürk's reading Namık Kemal's poems. Namık Kemal addresses the nation by means of his poems. Atatürk expresses his love for the nation by reading them.	5
38	Incorrect Answers Atatürk's being a nice person	0
16	Atatürk has read a lot of books.	
25	Blank	0
20	Other answers The sentence about Atatürk's being successful in math	0

In the analysis of the data collected within the scope of the study, one sample t-test was used in comparing the reading comprehension level on the basis of culture and independent t-test and Mann Whitney U test were used to compare students' success according to gender factor. Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the students' reading comprehension level.

### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1. What is the reading comprehension level according to text type (narrative – informative) for texts about Turkish and American cultures?

One sample t-test was used to determine whether the reading comprehension level in narrative and informative texts are affected by cultural differences. The results of the analysis, arithmetic means and standard deviations of the third and fourth grade students' reading comprehension levels according to text type are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Third and Fourth Grade Students' Reading Comprehension Levels According to Text Types**

Class Level	Text	N	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	t	P
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Sealed	29	49.94	22.90	2.65	0.013*
	Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri (Thorns Of The Rose Street)	29	38.68	24.47		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	We Are Learning Nature Sports	37	46.96	23.01	2.68	0.011*
	Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek? (What Do Traditions And Customs Mean?)	38	58.35	26.25		
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Cochise	64	60.42	25.10	0.52	0.064
	Atatürk'ün Gençliği (Youth Of Atatürk)	64	62.02	21.30		
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	White Fang	57	29.87	23.91	11.59	0.000*
	Yüz Tümenlik Banknot (A Ten-Thousand Banknote)	59	62.60	29.07		

The arithmetic mean of the third grade students' reading comprehension level for the American culture-based, narrative text named "Sealed" (49.94) is highly different from the arithmetic mean of their reading comprehension level for the Turkish culture-based, narrative text named "Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri" (Thorns Of The Rose Street) (38.68). As for the informative texts, the arithmetic mean of reading comprehension level for the Turkish culture-based "Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek?" (What Do Traditions and Customs Mean?) (58.35) is highly and statistically different from the arithmetic mean of reading comprehension level for the American culture-based "We Are Learning Nature Sports" (46.96).

The arithmetic means of the fourth grade students' reading comprehension level for the American culture-based, informative text named "Cochise" (60.42) and the Turkish culture-based, informative text named "Atatürk'ün Gençliği" (Youth of Atatürk) (62.02) are not statistically different. As for the narrative texts, the arithmetic mean of reading comprehension level for the American culture-based "White Fang" (29.87) varies with the arithmetic mean of reading comprehension level for the Turkish culture-based "Yüz Tümenlik Banknot" (A Ten-Thousand Banknote) (62.60) to a large extent.

### 3.2. Does the reading comprehension level change to a great extent with regard to gender for texts about Turkish and American cultures?

Since the number of samples in the groups was not large enough to understand whether the third grade students' reading comprehension level for narrative texts about Turkish and American cultures varies according to gender, the Mann Whitney U test is the non-parametric equivalent of independent t-test was used. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: A Comparison between Third Grade Students' Reading Comprehension Levels by Gender (Mann Whitney U test was used)**

Text	Gender	N	Average Ranking	Total Ranking	U	p
Sealed	Male	20	20.55	411.00	139.0	0.344
	Female	17	17.18	292.00		
Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri(Thorns Of The Rose Street)	Male	20	18.75	375.00	165.0	0.661
	Female	18	20.33	366.00		
We Are Learning Nature Sports	Male	13	14.38	187.00	96.000	.943
	Female	16	15.50	248.00		
Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek?(What Do Traditions And Customs Mean?)	Male	14	14.89	208.50	103.50	.726
	Female	15	15.10	226.50		

When Table 4 is analyzed, it is possible to see that third grade students' reading comprehension levels for narrative and informative texts do not vary significantly by gender. When the average rankings of the narrative texts (Sealed and Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri) are taken into consideration, the differences are not statistically significant. Since the points do not vary dramatically, there are two different groups as male and female students and points are equally distributed between them assessing the fourth grade students' reading comprehension level by gender, independent t-test was applied and the results are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: A Comparison between Fourth Grade Students' Reading Comprehension Levels by Gender (Independent t-test was used)**

Text	Gender	N	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	sd	t	p
White Fang	Male	27	25.09	19.38	55	-1.464	.149
	Female	30	34.22	26.93			
Yüz Tümenlik Banknot (A Ten-Thousand Banknote)	Male	30	67.30	25.13	57	1.279	0.206
	Female	29	57.70	32.36			
Cochise	Male	31	59.41	22.82	62	-0.309	.758
	Female	33	61.36	27.38			
Atatürk'ün Gençliği (Youth Of Atatürk)	Male	32	59.81	22.13	62	-0.825	.412
	Female	32	64.22	20.55			

According to the results of the analysis, reading comprehension levels for "White Fang" which is an American culture-based, narrative text and "Yüz Tümenlik Banknot" (A Ten-Thousand Banknote), which is a Turkish culture-based, narrative text vary significantly by gender. This situation could be interpreted in the way that female and male students' reading comprehension levels are close to each other. While the arithmetic mean of female students' reading comprehension level for "White Fang" is partially higher than male students (34.22), the arithmetic mean of male students' reading comprehension level for "Yüz Tümenlik Banknot" (A Ten-Thousand Banknote) is partially higher (67.30). Within the scope of the study, "Atatürk'ün Gençliği" (Youth of Atatürk) which is a Turkish culture-based, informative text and "Cochise" which is an American culture-based, informative text were read by fourth graders. As per the analysis results for both texts, in informative texts female and male students' reading comprehension levels do not differ significantly by gender.

#### 4. DISCUSSION and RESULTS

The endeavour to understand culture from the native's point of view is the main foundation of the "emic" approach, whereas the observer's endeavour to understand it from his/her own point of view is the "etic" approach. However it is not easy to make a distinction between these two approaches because of the differences of native models which the observer acquired from his own culture and society (Emiroğlu and Aydın, 2009, 260). Since the students assigned various meanings to the words in the texts, a great number of answer recognition codes was invented in the scoring rubric. Students' comprehending the word "immigrant" mentioned in the text called "White Fang" as "migratory birds" and the ideas about the discrimination between Indians and White People not being understood by the students are examples of "etic" approach whereas concepts such as "customs and traditions" in the text named "Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek?" (What Do Traditions And Customs Mean?) and concepts such as "war, peace, leadership, freedom" mentioned in the text named "Atatürk'ün Gençliği" (Youth of Atatürk) and "Cochise" were easily understood as "emic" cultural elements in spite of being abstract concepts. Our mental schemata shaped in the cultures where we live cause distortion in ideas of reference and fall in reading comprehension level. Research show that skills such as vocabulary and word recognition are of utmost importance in terms of reading comprehension (Sanchez, 2010, Priebe, Keenan and Miller, 2012; Rydland, Aukrust and Fulland, 2012). For instance, although "Yüz Tümenlik Banknot" (A Ten-Thousand Banknote) was originally a foreign text, reading comprehension level was very high since the students were familiar with the plot in terms of culture content. Borst (2004) notes that the main factor in reading comprehension is the readers' education levels' and personal point of views' reflecting their cultural perceptions rather than the texts being related to their country. In the light of the analyses carried out, if cultural elements are the ones with which the students are familiar thanks to their daily lives, then the reading comprehension level goes up. However if the text is composed of elements which the students have never experienced in their daily lives, the comprehension level decreases. Whereas the reading comprehension level increases prominently in line with readers' responsibility and mutual learning, vocabulary is vital in inter-group comparisons according to class levels for non-narrative texts (Splinter, 2011; Cesa, 2012). However, in this study, reading comprehension level for texts about Turkish and American cultures varies by text type. Reading comprehension level for texts about Turkish and American cultures does not change significantly by gender. This situation could be interpreted in two ways; students' reading comprehension levels do not related to gender variable and gender has no influence upon students' reading comprehension level.

In line with the results of this study, comparative studies can be conducted on students as regards emic and etic approaches. For instance, war is an etic concept which has a universal sense. Picasso's most famous painting "Guernica" and Hüseyin Avni Lifij's "Kara Gün" (Black Day) includes emic evidence. Certain studies about visual reading can be carried out in terms of culture content on these masterpieces. Furthermore, "Ayağına Diken Batan Karga" (Crow Who Has Prickle In Foot) which is a tale containing Turkish culture elements and "Pied Piper of Hamelin" which emerged in Medieval Europe can be analyzed in terms of culture content. Research and reading activities can be conducted to help students recognize their own culture, get information about other cultures, reach universal values and gain rich reading experiences.



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## Uzun Özet

Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerin ilköğretim öğrencilerinin okuduğunu anlama düzeyine etkisini incelemeyi amaçlayan bu araştırma betimsel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmada Ankara ili sınırları içinde büyük bir kolejden basit seçkisiz örnekleme yöntemi ile üçüncü ve dördüncü sınıflardan Mayıs 2010 tarihinde veri toplanmıştır. Araştırma grubu 18'i kız ve 20'si erkek 38 üçüncü sınıf öğrencisi ve 33'ü kız, 32'si erkek 65 dördüncü sınıf öğrencisi olmak üzere toplam 103 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında veri toplamak için okuduğunu anlama ölçeği kullanılmış, öğrencilerin sorulara verdiği yanıtlar dereceli puanlama anahtarı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Okuduğunu Anlama Ölçeği, 3 ve 4. sınıf düzeyinde biri Türk biri Amerikan kültürü içerikli öyküleyici metinlerde 13 ve bilgilendirici metinlerde 10 açık uçlu soru içeren toplam sekiz metinden oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışmada Akyol'un soru sınıflaması kullanılarak anlama soruları hazırlanmıştır. Nota çevirme 100 puan üzerinden yapılmış; soruların puan değerlerini belirlemek için uzman görüşü alınmıştır. Metinlerin okunabilirlik ve kültür farkına ilişkin içerikleri, uzmanlar tarafından incelenmiştir. Öğrencilerin okuma anlama düzeyi; sınıf öğretmenliği deneyimi olan ve el yazısı okuyabilen üç puanlayıcı tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada; 3 ve 4. sınıf düzeyindeki sekiz metnin değerlendirilmesinde üç puanlayıcının puan ortalamaları dikkate alınmıştır. Üç puanlayıcının puanlama güvenilirliği; Sınıf içi Korelasyon Katsayısı tekniği kullanılarak belirlenmiştir. Analizler sonucunda puanlayıcılar arası güvenilirlik katsayısı her bir metin için ayrı ayrı hesaplanmıştır. Üç puanlayıcının kullanıldığı puanlama güvenilirliği 0.92-0.99 arasında değişmektedir. Araştırma kapsamında toplanan verilerin analizinde; öğrencilerin okuduğunu anlama düzeyinin kültüre göre karşılaştırılmasında tek örneklemlili t-testi, öğrenci başarısının cinsiyete göre karşılaştırılmasında ilişkisiz t-testi ile Mann Whitney U testi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın birinci alt problemine-Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde, okuduğunu anlama düzeyi metin türüne göre (öyküleyici-bilgilendirici) nedir?- ilişkin bulgular: Üçüncü sınıf öğrencilerinin "Mühürlü" isimli Amerikan kültürü içerikli öyküleyici metinde okuduğunu anlama düzeyi açısından ortalaması (49,94), Türk kültürü içerikli öyküleyici "Gül Sokağı'nın Dikenleri" isimli metnin (38,68) ortalamasından anlamlı farklılık göstermektedir. Bilgilendirici metin türünde Türk kültürü içerikli "Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek?" isimli metnin ortalaması (58,35), Amerikan kültürü içerikli "Doğa Sporlarını Tanıyoruz" isimli metnin ortalamasından (46,96) istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılık göstermektedir. Dördüncü sınıf öğrencilerinin bilgilendirici metin türünde Amerikan kültürü içerikli "Cochise" metni (60.42) ile Türk kültürü içerikli "Atatürk'ün Gençliği" (62.02) metni istatistiksel açıdan farklılık içermemektedir. Öyküleyici türde Amerikan kültürü içerikli "Beyaz Diş" isimli metnin ortalaması (29.87) "Yüz Tümenlik Banknot" isimli metnin ortalamasından (62.60) anlamlı bir şekilde

farklılaşmaktadır. Araştırmanın ikinci problemine- Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde, okuduğunu anlama düzeyi cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir şekilde farklılaşmakta mıdır?- ilişkin bulgular: Üçüncü sınıf öğrencilerinin öyküleyici ve bilgilendirici türdeki metinlere ilişkin okuduğunu anlama düzeyi cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir. Analiz sonuçlarına göre Amerikan kültürü içerikli öyküleyici türdeki “Beyaz Diş” metni ve Türk kültürü içerikli öyküleyici türdeki “Yüz Tümenlik Banknot” metni okuduğunu anlama düzeyinde cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir. Bu durum kız ve erkek öğrencilerin öyküleyici metinlerde anlama düzeyinin benzer olduğu biçiminde yorumlanabilir. Kız ve erkek öğrencilerin puan ortalamaları “Beyaz Diş” metninde kız öğrencilerin ortalaması (34,22) kısmen yüksek iken, “Yüz Tümenlik Banknot” metninde erkek öğrencilerin puan ortalaması (67,30) kısmen daha yüksektir. Çalışma kapsamında 4.sınıf öğrencilerine Türk kültürü içerikli bilgilendirici türde “Atatürk’ün Gençliği” ve Amerikan kültürü içerikli bilgilendirici türde “Cochise” isimli metinler okutulmuştur. Her iki metnin analiz sonucuna göre kız ve erkek öğrencilerin bilgilendirici metinlerdeki okuduğunu anlama düzeyinin cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir farklılık göstermediği bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır.

Araştırma sonuçlarına göre; Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde okuduğunu anlama düzeyi cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir ve metinlerdeki kültür öğeleri öğrencilerin aşına olduğu gündelik kavramlarda farklılık yaratmazken yaşantıları yoluyla deneyimlemedikleri dolaylı fikirler sebebiyle okuduğunu anlama oranının düştüğü biçiminde yorumlanmıştır. Bu çalışmada metindeki “etik” kelimelere öğrencilerin farklı anlamlar yüklemesi nedeniyle dereceli puanlama anahtarında oldukça çok sayıda yanıt tanıma kodu oluşmuştur. “Beyaz Diş” metninde geçen “göçmen” kelimesinin bazı öğrenciler tarafından göçmen halk yerine “göçmen kuş” olarak algılanması ve Kızılderililer ile Beyazlar arasındaki ayrımcılığa yönelik fikirlerin anlaşılmasında “etik” kavrama örnek teşkil ederken “Gelenek Görenek Ne Demek?” metninde geçen “gelenek ve görenek” kavramları, “Atatürk’ün Gençliği” ve “Cochise” metinlerinde geçen “savaş, barış, lider, özgürlük” kavramları soyut olmasına rağmen “emik” kültür ifadeleri olarak kolaylıkla anlamlandırılmıştır. Yaşadığımız toplumda gelişen şemalarımız farklı kültürlerin öğelerini anlamlandırmada referans fikirlerin çarpıtılmasına ve anlama oranının düşmesine neden olmaktadır. Örneğin “Yüz Tümenlik Banknot” metni aslen yabancı bir yazardan alınmış olmasına rağmen kültür içeriği açısından öğrencilerin aşına olduğu bir kurguda ilerlediği için anlama oranında anlamlı farklılık olduğu biçiminde yorumlanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada, Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde okuduğunu anlama düzeyi metin türüne göre farklılaşmamaktadır. Türk Amerikan kültürü içerikli metinlerde okuduğunu anlama düzeyi cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermemektedir. Bu durum, öğrencilerin bu tür metinlerdeki okuduğunu anlama düzeyinin cinsiyet değişkeniyle ilişkili olmadığı şeklinde yorumlanabileceği gibi öğrencilerin okuduğunu anlama düzeyinde cinsiyetin etkili olmadığı şeklinde de yorumlanabilir. Bu çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar doğrultusunda öğrencilerle etik ve emik kavramlar üzerinde karşılaştırmalı çalışmalar yapılabilir. Örneğin; savaş evrensel anlamı olan etik bir kavramdır Picasso’nun ünlü “Guernica” tablosu ve Hüseyin Avni Lifij’in “Kara Gün” tablosu emik kanıtlar içermektedir. Bu eserler üzerinde kültür içeriği bakımından görsel okuma alanında çalışma yapılabilir. Örneğin; Türk kültürü unsurlarını içeren “Ayağına Diken Batan Karga” ve Orta Çağ Avrupası koşullarında ortaya çıkan “Fareli Köyün Kavalcısı” gibi masallar kültür içeriği açısından incelenebilir. Öğrencilerin kendi kültür öğelerini tanıyıp başka kültürler hakkında bilgi edinmesini ve evrensel değerlere ulaşmak konusunda zengin okuma deneyimleri yaşamasına yönelik araştırmalar ve okuma etkinlikleri yapılabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: okuduğunu anlama, kültür, cinsiyet, metin türü

### Citation Information

Baş, Ö. (2013). The effect of texts about Turkish and American cultures on reading comprehension level of primary school students [in Turkish]. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi [Hacettepe University Journal of Education]*, 28(3), 30-40.