

Examining aspects of teachers and teacher trainees' L1 and L2 reading

Tary Blanka

Summary

The aim of the present dissertation was to identify select areas in L1 (mother tongue) and L2 (foreign language) reading where teachers and teacher trainees might face difficulties so that they might receive more effective professional help in the future. Therefore their L1 and L2 reading strategy use, reading habits, and reading difficulties were investigated with questionnaires that also inquired about their opinion about L1 and L2 development of reading skills in the Hungarian education system.

In the first study, items from the Hungarian version of Mokhtari and Reichard's MARSII (*Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory*) were applied (Molitorisz, 2012, Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002) with additional questions concerning reading habits, reading difficulties and respondents' opinion on L1 and L2 reading instruction in Hungarian schools. background variables were targeted, too. Data was acquired online; the questionnaire was anonymous. Convenience sampling involved teachers from language schools and those who had got their degree at a major Hungarian university (N=256).

In the second study the Hungarian version of the MARSII-R (*Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory-Revised*) was piloted (Mokhtari, Dimitrov & Reichard, 2018) with additional questions about a few background variables. Data was acquired online among teacher trainees who participated in education courses at a major Hungarian university (N=44).

In the final study, the Hungarian version of the MARSII-R was used (Mokhtari, Dimitrov & Reichard, 2018). Also, closed questions were presented in the questionnaire which were based on findings of the first study. Additionally, some background variables were investigated as well. A sample of N=166 teacher trainees were involved from the same Hungarian university. The anonymous questionnaire was administered online.

The samples of the studies cannot be statistically compared. As questions cover several areas of reading and background variables, the acquired data and results are very detailed. The main findings of my research are as follows. The instruments can be used, but they need further improvement. Teachers and teacher trainees report they use a fair number of reading strategies, but only few of them at a medium or high level. These are strategies which do not always involve higher level thinking skills. Participants' readings mostly involve shorter and L1 texts, while in L2 they mostly read professional literature. Fiction is always at the back of the line. Teacher trainees report reading task instructions most often. When reading different texts, difficulties are experienced already at the surface level of the text, and mostly in longer L1 texts or L2 texts. Regarding reading in L1, participants often blame problems of the text, while in L2, their own lack of L2 proficiency. Reading instruction in Hungarian schools is viewed as present but not very effective – or if it is, it is so in foreign language classes. In the process of improving reading skills, teachers underline their own responsibility and teaching methods. Background variables regarding L2 most often make a difference only in questions which target L2 reading topics. Questions about L1 are only sometimes impacted by background variables.

Thus, findings of the dissertation clearly suggest that more focused instruction is necessary in teacher education in order for teachers to become better readers themselves and so to be able to provide more effective help to their students as well.

Keywords: reading strategies, reading habits, teachers, teacher trainees, survey