

# **An Investigation into the Impact of Cultural Knowledge on Reading Comprehension**

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## **Abstract:**

This study reports the findings of a pilot study that aims, following Alptekin (2002), to investigate the impact of nativization - an indicator of cultural knowledge - on reading comprehension.

The pilot study was carried out at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey, in the departments of English Language Teaching and English Language and Literature with 72 students. The study was conducted through a 2X2 quasi-experimental research design whereby four different conditions were created. The first group of students were given an original short story while a second group of students were given a nativized version of the same short story. In comparison to this pairing, the third group of students were given the original short story with some reading activities while the fourth group were given the nativized version with activities. Pretests and posttests were administered. Posttest scores of the students were analysed through Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on SPSS.

The statistical analysis yielded interesting differences between groups in favour of the group who received the nativized version of the short story with reading activities followed by the group that studied the original text with activities. The first two conditions were followed by nativized-no-activity condition and the original text-no-activity condition. This finding supported Alptekin's (2002) findings and went further, to suggest that the lack of cultural knowledge can be compensated for through reading activities.

## **Background**

Reading is accepted as the most essential skill for learners studying English as a foreign language (EFL), because through reading EFL learners get exposure to the target language and they build up their language proficiency by receiving linguistic input. As reading is a complex process, getting exposed to reading material alone is not enough to achieve the writer's aim. This active process of EFL readers is explained by Anderson (1999) as follows:

“Reading is an active, fluent process which involves the reader and the reading material in building meaning. Meaning does not reside on the printed page ... (a) synergy occurs in reading, which combines the words on the printed page with the reader's background knowledge and experiences.” (Anderson, 1999:1)

EFL readers will have better comprehension if they have background knowledge about the topic they read because they will be able to make connections between their preliminary experiences and the topic; but if the readers do not have any experiences about the topic then they will not be able to make connections and that will prevent them from comprehending the text.

There are different mechanisms in the process of reading comprehension. Readers are envisaged to get involved in bottom-up processing or top-down processing of the reading material (Anderson, 1999), although they can also get involved in both types of processing at the same time to better comprehend the texts (Murtagh, 1989).

In bottom-up models, the reading process begins with examination of the printed graphic representations, followed by recognising graphic stimuli, decoding them to sound, recognizing words and decoding meanings (Alderson, 2000). According to Anderson (1999), bottom-up or data-driven processing depends primarily on the information presented by the text where that information is processed from letter features to letters and from words to meaning. In such a view, readers are expected to recognise the letters in order to read the words.

Top-down processing is seen as the readers' contribution to the incoming text (Alderson, 2000), emphasizing the importance of schema in the process of reading comprehension. In top-down models, readers are expected to relate their prior experience with the text they are reading. So, schema activation plays an important role in top-down process. Karakaş and Erten (2003), for example, found that different types of reading activities done in reading classes could facilitate the comprehension of short stories simply by activating readers' schemata, which are seen as interlocking mental structures representing readers' knowledge (Alderson, 2000).

Interactive models are accepted as the most comprehensive description of the reading process. Interactive models combine elements of both bottom-up and top-down models. According to Murtagh (1989), good second language readers are those who can efficiently integrate bottom-up and top-down models. The meaning lies in the interaction between readers and the text (Grabe, 1991).

Alptekin (2003) identifies three types of schema: content schema, formal schema, and abstract schema. The content schema can be defined as knowledge of the world (Carrell, 1983) where it can further be divided into two different types of schema: background knowledge and subject matter knowledge. The second one is formal schema that is defined as the knowledge of language and linguistic conventions, including knowledge of how texts are organised and what the main features of a particular genre are. The third type of schema is abstract schema - also called 'story schema' by Alptekin (2003) - that refers to the role of cultural membership. Abstract schema involves cultural knowledge that needs to be made use of to fully comprehend a text. By comparing two groups of students who read different versions of the same short story, Alptekin (2002 and 2003) demonstrated that cultural background knowledge had a significant effect on the inferential comprehension of short stories.

## **Study**

### **Objectives of the study:**

This study aimed to find out the effects of cultural knowledge on the comprehension of short stories. Below are the research questions of the study:

- 1- Does the familiarity of students with cultural content of short stories have any effect on their comprehension?
- 2- Do reading activities, which are used with short stories, help readers achieve better comprehension?

The study had two hypotheses:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Cultural familiarity plays a major role in the comprehension of short stories;
- H<sub>2</sub>: Although nativization contributes to the comprehension of short stories, the impact of reading activities still remains a significant factor in the comprehension of short stories.

## Methodology

### Setting

The pilot study was conducted in the English Language Teaching Department at the Faculty of Education and in the English Language and Literature Department at the Faculty of Science and Arts of Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University with four third year classes. The pilot study was carried out over four days during the winter semester of the 2002-2003 academic year. All the groups at the Department of English Language Teaching were taught by the teacher who had already been teaching short stories in the ELT Department and kindly gave permission for her classes to participate in the study. The group at the Department of English Language and Literature was taught by the researcher with kind permission from the teacher of this class. As the researcher had been working as a research assistant at the ELT Department, he had already been introduced to these students, but he had not been introduced to the students at the Department of ELL before the study was conducted.

The pilot study was conducted in the English Language Teaching Department at the Faculty of Education and in the English Language and Literature Department at the Faculty of Science and Arts because the high English language proficiency of the participants would enable the researcher to compare and contrast the effects of cultural schema on reading comprehension.

### Participants

All the participants thought as advanced Turkish learners of English as they had to take a placement test to study at the ELT and ELL Departments. The groups consisted of students at the average age of 21. As the groups were natural classes, there were absentees from each group. The pilot study was conducted in an obligatory short story course at the ELT Department; on the contrary, the course was an elective one for ELL students. As can be seen in Table 1, the original short story was studied with the ONA group of participants without activities and with the OWA group of participants with activities, whereas the adjusted short story was studied with the ANA group of participants without activities and the AWA group of participants with activities.

The total number of participants in the pilot study and the distribution of males and females are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number and Gender Distribution of Participants**

GROUP	DEPARTMENT	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Original no activity (ONA)	ELL	10	1	11
Original with activity (OWA)	ELT	16	5	21
Adjusted no activity (ANA)	ELT	14	4	18
Adjusted with activity (AWA)	ELT	13	8	21
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>71</b>

Permission had previously been sought from the students to evaluate their pretests and posttests for research purposes. On this occasion, they were reminded that the data to be collected was intended for research purposes only; would be kept confidential, and would have no bearing on assessment of the course.

## **Materials & Instrumentation**

### **The reading text**

The short story 'The Lottery' by Shirley Jackson (see references for URL address) was chosen for 'Turkification' (Alptekin, 2002). The short story was nativized for research purposes. During the nativization period, the researcher changed some parts of the short story to provide better comprehension of the story. The main aim of the nativization was to re-write the short story as if the story were taking place in the city of Çanakkale in Turkey. During the nativization process, the names of the characters were changed to Turkish names; also, to activate readers' schemata the researcher added some clues. All these changes had to make sense in the readers' minds in order to activate their schemata about Turkish culture and the city of Çanakkale. Some changes were also made to words that in American English but do not appear in British English.

Below are the details of some changes for the nativized form of the short story 'The Lottery':

The original story takes place in a small town/village, the population of which is about three hundred. In the adjusted form of the story, the readers are faced with a village around Çanakkale. They can easily understand that the story takes place around Çanakkale because of the wind blowing through the Dardanelles. In real life, also, vegetables and fruit are grown around Çanakkale and the villagers sell them to the merchants. That is why there is a long description of the square of the village where the villagers spent their time waiting for the merchants in cafes, and sell to them. While waiting the villagers do not have much to do. The old ones chat the whole day and go to the mosque, while the younger ones meet and play cards and backgammon and also watch football matches on a large screen. There has to be at least two cafes in the village as it is not common for youngsters to play cards and smoke while they are with their fathers and uncles. So one of the cafes is just for the old and the other one is for the young. The first paragraph of the story, especially tries to activate the schemata of the readers by giving details of an ordinary Turkish village.

In the second paragraph of the story, children on vacation are described. As the date of the lottery remains the same as the original one, 27<sup>th</sup> of June, probably the children are on vacation for two weeks – most of the time schools are off for the summer holiday after the second week of June in Turkey. So in the adjusted form, it is indicated that the children are on vacation for two weeks. In the adjusting process, no extra importance was given to the names. Of course, there are some exceptions. For example, in the original story there is a boy named 'Dickie Delacroix' and the villagers pronounce the surname as 'Dellacroy'. In the adjusted form his name is changed to 'İlker Kibritçioğlu' and the surname is pronounced as 'Kirbitçi', which is a very common problematic sound for most uneducated people in Turkey.

In the third paragraph of the adjusted story, men talk about planting and rain as in the original story but in addition to this, they also speak about their financial problems, as most of the time villagers in Turkey complain about their financial problems. Also, in the adjusted story they speak of footballers' transfer fees as the story takes place at end of June when football teams transfer players. In the villages, women are not allowed to wear any dress they want, so in the adjusted story women wear faded dark, long skirts and sweaters as demanded by their husbands and tradition. In the original story, the women just greet one another but in the adjusted form, they also kiss the hands of the older women, as it is a must for anyone in Turkey to kiss the hands of elders to show respect.

In the following paragraph, there is a description of ‘Mr. Summers’, who conducts the lottery. In the adjusted form, he is called ‘Recep Çavuş’, because ‘çavuş’ means ‘sergeant’, and joining the army has vital importance for Turks. Here, ‘çavuş’ refers to authority. In the original story, square dances, the teenage club, and the Halloween program are also conducted by Mr. Summers, but in the adjusted form they are not mentioned as they do not appear in Turkish culture. Instead, Recep Çavuş has the duty of conducting open-air wedding ceremonies. Also, in the original story Recep Çavuş runs a coal business, but as the adjusted form takes place in Çanakkale where there is a town famous for its cheese he runs a dairy. In the original story, the postmaster helps Recep Çavuş run with the lottery but in the adjusted form there is a forester, as a forester represents officialdom formality in a village.

In the original story, Old Man Warner is the oldest man in the village. In the adjusted form ‘Hikmet Dede’ takes his place. Here ‘Hikmet’ – means ‘wisdom’ in Turkish – represents his background knowledge about the lottery and also his assumptions about giving up the lottery, and ‘Dede’ – means ‘grandfather’ in Turkish – represents his age.

In the original story the black box spends one year in Mr. Graves’s barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it is set on a shelf in the Martin grocery shop but in the adjusted story it spends one year in Hayri Bey’s barn and another year underfoot in the Martı grocery shop, and sometimes it is set on a shelf beside the coffins in the room in the mosque garden. Here, ‘coffin’ is the key word to activate readers schematic knowledge about death without giving any clue about the end of the story.

Figure 1 demonstrates the main differences between the two versions of the story.

**Figure 1: Main differences between two versions of the short story**

ORIGINAL SHORT STORY	NATIVIZED SHORT STORY
Bobby Martin	Bora Martı
Harry Jones	Hayri Cengizolu
Dickie Delacroix	İlker Kibritçiođlu
Mr. Summers (Joe)	Recep Çavuş
Mr. Graves (Harry)	Hayri Bey
Mr. Martin	Mahmut
Baxter	Burak
Old Man Warner	Hikmet Dede
Mrs. Hutchinson (Tessie)	Kader Teyze
Mrs. Delacroix	Hatçe Bacı
Mr. Hutchinson (Bill)	Murat Bahtsızolu
Dunbar	Dündar Sakar
Mrs. Dunbar (Janey)	Naciye
Horace	Murat
Jack (Watson)	Yiđit
Adams (Steve)	Adem
Allen	Ali
Anderson	Sadık
Bentham	Baki
Mrs. Graves	Elif Ana
Clark	Kamil
Mr. Delacroix	Nusret
Harburt	Hayrettin
Jones	Cemil
Overdyke	Osman
Percy	Atilla
Zanini	Aydın
Don	Sezgin
Eva	Burcu
Bill (Jr.)	Küçük Murat
Nancy	Neriman
Dave (Davy)	Davut
center	centre
color	colour
humoredly	humouredly
humorlessly	humourlessly

### Pretest and posttest:

A pretest (see appendix B) was administered in order to be sure that the participants had not read the short story beforehand.

A recall type posttest (see appendix B) was administered at the end of the reading session. The posttest was also written for the two different versions of the story: nativized and original version. The posttest included ten open-ended pen and paper type of comprehension questions. Students were not allowed to refer to the reading text during the posttest period. Nor were they allowed to use their dictionaries.

### Procedures for data collection:

Different groups of students were given different treatments. Figure 2 illustrates the lesson plans followed by each group of students.

**Figure 2: Procedures for each group of students**

<b>TREATMENT 1 ONA</b>	<b>TREATMENT 2 OWA</b>	<b>TREATMENT 3 ANA</b>	<b>TREATMENT 4 AWA</b>
The original text was given without activities (30')	<i>Pre-reading activities:</i> Brainstorming (3') Pre-questioning (3') <i>Reading the story</i> (25') <i>While reading activities:</i> Scanning (2') Skimming (2') Clarifying (3') Inferring (3') <i>Post-reading activities:</i> Thinking aloud (2') Question / answer Relationships (2')	The adjusted text was given without activities (30')	<i>Pre-reading activities:</i> Brainstorming (3') Pre-questioning (3') <i>Reading the story</i> (25') <i>While reading activities:</i> Scanning (2') Skimming (2') Clarifying (3') Inferring (3') <i>Post-reading activities:</i> Thinking aloud (2') Question / answer Relationships (2')
Posttest given (15')	Posttest given (15')	Posttest given (15')	Posttest given (15')
Total 45'	Total 60'	Total 45'	Total 60'

Students of all groups were asked to ignore the thought of being observed by a researcher and behave just as in real courses. The short story chosen for the pilot study was 'The Lottery', which the students at the ELT Department had already studied in their short story course. During the application of the pilot study at the ELT Department, the researcher just observed the lessons but did not take any roles except giving pretests and posttests. Before the lesson started, the teacher explained the reason for the researcher's appearance in the class.

The short story teacher and the researcher agreed on the lesson plans of each group before the lessons started. Also, the students were reminded that both the pretest and posttest results were going to have no effect on their short story course assessment.

### Procedures for data analysis:

Since the researcher had to be sure that the students had not read the short story 'The Lottery' beforehand, the answers that the students gave for the pretest were checked.

Answer keys were prepared for the posttests of both adjusted and original stories and all the assessments were done in accordance with these keys. There were ten questions in both versions of the posttests and each correct answer equalled ten points. During the assessing process, the following points were taken into consideration:

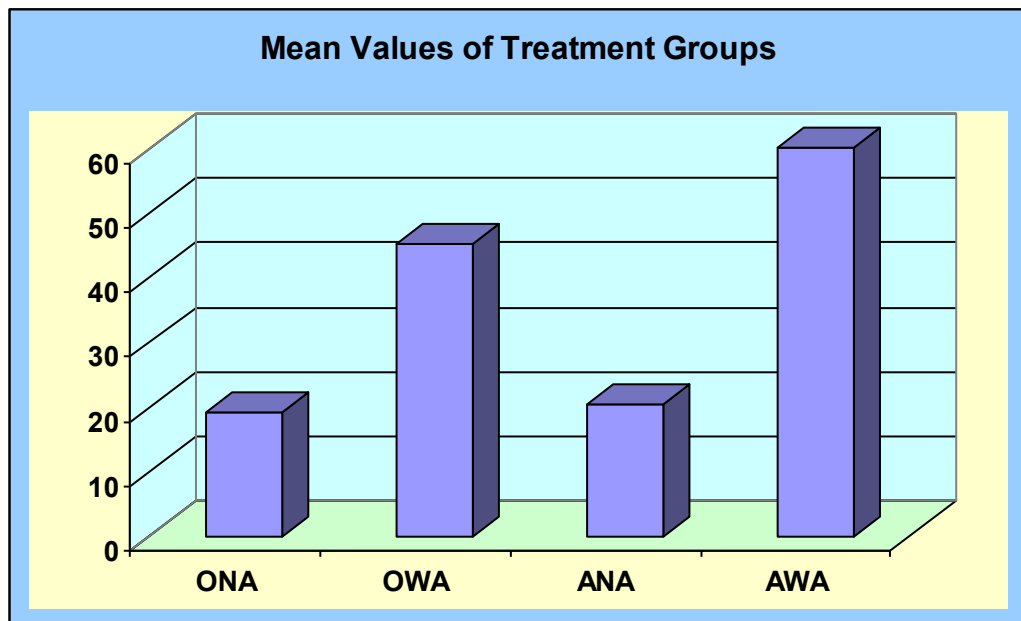
- Students were evaluated for their comprehension of the short story.
- The rater ignored students' grammatical mistakes.
- To provide intrarater reliability the answer key was followed and the names of the students were not checked before completing the evaluation process.

The posttest results of the participants were entered into a computer through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data editor. Posttest scores of the participants were analysed by using an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedure on SPSS to find out any between-group differences.

**Table 2: Mean values of posttest scores**

	Treatment groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Posttest scores	ONA	11	19,1818	16,4974	4,9741
	OWA	22	45,0909	18,9584	4,0419
	ANA	17	20,4706	13,4495	3,2620
	AWA	21	60,0000	13,3978	2,9236
	TOTAL	71	39,5915	22,9792	2,7271

**Figure 2: Posttest scores**



Results from a further post hoc Scheffe test supported the hypotheses formulated at the start of the study. Table 3 illustrates the results of the post hoc Scheffe test.

**Table 3: Multiple Comparisons of posttest scores**

Dependent Variable	(I) Condition	(J) Condition	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Posttest scores	ONA	OWA	-25,9091	5,8394	,001
		ANA	-1,2888	6,1189	,998
		AWA	-40,8182	5,8855	,000
	OWA	ONA	25,9091	5,8394	,001
		ANA	24,6203	5,1064	,000
		AWA	-14,9091	4,8243	,029
	ANA	ONA	1,2888	6,1189	,998
		OWA	-24,6203	5,1064	,000
		AWA	-39,5294	5,1591	,000
	AWA	ONA	40,8182	5,8855	,000
		OWA	14,9091	4,8243	,029
		ANA	39,5294	5,1591	,000

**Findings & Discussion:**

As expected, the ‘adjusted with activity’ group outperformed the other groups as their schemata activated through Turkification of the short story and was supported by reading activities. This group was followed by the ‘original with activity’ group, as they read the original short story with the help of the pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. So it is not wrong to claim that schema activation should be supported by reading activities, otherwise readers’ schemata will not be activated just by nativizing the reading texts. As the ‘adjusted no activity’ group did not have any reading activities, they did not have the chance of relating their preliminary knowledge with the text they read. It is clear that reading activities play a very important role in reading comprehension.

**Conclusion:**

As the results of this study show, activating schema has vital importance in reading comprehension, so EFL reading teachers would be advised to activate the readers’ schemata for better comprehension of the short stories. Nativizing a short story is a way of schema activation, but if the schema activation period is supported by pre, while, and post-reading activities, the readers will better understand the text. The teacher should therefore complement reading lessons with reading activities. Nativizing a short story does not mean rewriting it, but it is as hard as actually writing a short story; so it is not always possible to nativize a story. If the teacher does not have plenty of time to nativize the story, then the teacher may help his/her students by giving cultural cues about the story in order to make connections between the foreign culture and the native one. Schema activation is not valid only for advanced learners, but it is valid for all learners; so reading teachers should not hesitate to activate beginner or intermediate learners’ schemata. Those who are developing materials should take the readers’ schemata into consideration.

**Implications:**

This study is a pilot study that is a part of the researcher’s MA thesis in preparation. There are some weaknesses in this study which should be taken into consideration. For example, Alptekin<sup>1</sup> (2003, personal communication) claims that changing the grammatical structure of the sentences in the short stories will affect the

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dr. Cem Alptekin is the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Boğaziçi University, Turkey, and works at the Department of English Language Teaching.



comprehension of the story; but in the nativized form of 'The Lottery' there are some sentences which were grammatically changed with the thought of schema activation. So these changes may lead to adjusted readers facing complex sentences whereas original short story readers read simple sentences. That would affect the comprehension of the story. Also Grabe<sup>2</sup> (2003, personal communication), pointed out another weakness in the argument. As explained in the methodology section, two of the groups which studied the short story with activities were exposed to the story for forty-five minutes whereas two of the other groups which studied the short story without activities were exposed to the story just for thirty minutes. So it is questionable to claim that nativizing a short story or supporting reading lessons with pre, while, and post reading activities provides better comprehension. Better comprehension could be the result of fifteen minutes extra exposure to the short story. These two points in the study will be taken into consideration for the main study.

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### Appendix A:

#### THE LOTTERY by Shirley Jackson

The morning of June 27<sup>th</sup> was clear and sunny, with fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26<sup>th</sup>, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix -the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy" - eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

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<sup>2</sup> Prof. Dr. William Grabe works at the Department of English, at the University of North Arizona, USA.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted – as were the square dances, the teen-age club, the Halloween program – by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called. "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three-legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year, by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put away, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up – of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Though my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids were gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through; two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully, "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar," several people said. "Dunbar, Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar," he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me, I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband," Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for m'mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready? He called. "Now I'll read the names - heads of the families first - and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions; most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi, Steve," Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, "Hi, Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box took out of a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen," Mr. Summers said. "Anderson ... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more," Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row. "Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark ... Delacroix."

"There goes my old man," Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said, "Go on, Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next," Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely, and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hands, turning them over and over nervously. Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt ... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the other people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries," Mr. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke ... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called. "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson." The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saying, "Who is it?" "Who's got it?" "Is it the Dunbars?" "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers, "You didn't give him enough time to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair."

"Be a good sport, Tessie," Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

"It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe," Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family, that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for the families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said. "There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that."

Mrs. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

“Ready, Bill?” Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

“Remember,” Mr. Summers said, “take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help the little Dave.” Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. “Take a paper out of the box, Davy,” Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. “Take just one paper,” Mr. Summers said. Harry, you hold it for him.” Mr. Graves took the child’s hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

“Nancy next,” Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward, switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box. “Bill, Jr.,” Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet over-large, nearly knocked the box over as he got a paper out. “Tessie,” Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

“Bill,” Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, “I hope it’s not Nancy,” and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

“It’s not the way it used to be,” Old Man Warner said clearly. “People ain’t the way they used to be.”

“All right,” Mr. Summers said. “Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave’s.”

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill, Jr., opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

“Tessie,” Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

“It’s Tessie,” Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. “Show us her paper, Bill.”

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal-company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

“All right, folks,” Mr. Summers said. “Let’s finish quickly.”

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Mrs. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. “Come on,” she said. “Hurry up.”

Mrs. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath, “I can’t run at all. You’ll have to go ahead and I’ll catch up with you.”

The children had stones already, and someone gave little Davy Hutchinson a few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. “It isn’t fair,” she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head.

Old Man Warner was saying, “Come on, come on, everyone.” Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

“It isn’t fair, it isn’t right,” Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

#### **THE LOTTERY (Adjusted from Shirley Jackson)**

The morning of June 27<sup>th</sup> was clear and sunny, with fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The wind blowing through Dardanelle was caressing the warm bodies of the villagers who began to gather in the square where the villagers sell their products to the foreign merchants. There were two cafes in the square in one where old men of the village meet and chat whole day and in the other where the younger ones meet and play cards and watch football matches on a large screen. It was around ten o’clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26<sup>th</sup>, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o’clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the olds to get to the mosque and the others to play cards and backgammon.

The children assembled first, of course. The children were on vacation for two weeks as the school was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bora Martı had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bora and Hayri Yılmaz and İlker Kibritçiöğlü - the villagers pronounced this name “Kirbitçi” – eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and very small children rolled in the dust clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, financial problems of the villagers and the amount of the money that their favourite football team pays for the footballers. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded dark, long skirts and sweaters came shortly after their menfolk. The young and middle aged ones greeted and kissed one another while the old ones were expecting them to greet them and kiss their hands. Then they exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bora Martı ducked under his mother’s grasping hand and ran, laughing back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bora came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted – as were the open-air wedding ceremonies – by Recep Çavuş who joined the army during The War of Cyprus and still had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran a dairy, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called. “Little late today, folks.” The forester, Hayri Bey, followed him, carrying a three-legged stool, and the stool was put in the centre of the square and Recep Çavuş set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Recep Çavuş said, “Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?” there was a hesitation before two men, Mahmut, Bora’s father, and his oldest son, Burak, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Recep Çavuş stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Hikmet Dede, the oldest man in town, was born. Recep Çavuş spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Recep Çavuş began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year, by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood colour, and in some places faded or stained.

Mahmut and his oldest son, Burak, held the black box securely on the stool until Recep Çavuş had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Recep Çavuş had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Recep Çavuş had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Recep Çavuş and Hayri Bey made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Recep Çavuş's dairy and locked up until Recep Çavuş was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put away, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Hayri Bey's barn and another year underfoot in the Martı grocery, and sometimes it was set on a shelf beside the coffins in the room in the mosque garden and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Recep Çavuş declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up –of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing of Recep Çavuş's by the forester, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Recep Çavuş was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and dark blue trousers, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Hayri Bey and Mahmut and his son.

Just as Recep Çavuş finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Kader Teyze came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to İlker's mother Hatçe Bacı, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Though my old man was out back stacking wood," Kader Teyze went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids were gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty-seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Hatçe Bacı said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Kader Teyze craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Hatçe Bacı on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humouredly to let her through; two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Murat," and "Murat, she made it after all." Kader Teyze reached her husband, and Recep Çavuş, who had been waiting, said cheerfully, "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Kader." Kader Teyze said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Recep Çavuş?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Kader Teyze's arrival.

"Well, now," Recep Çavuş said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dünder," several people said. "Dünder, Dünder."

Recep Çavuş consulted his list. "Dünder Sakar," he said. "That's right. He broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me, I guess," a woman said, and Recep Çavuş turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband," Recep Çavuş said. "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Naciye?" Although Recep Çavuş and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Recep Çavuş waited with an expression of polite interest while Naciye answered.

"Murat's not but sixteen yet," Naciye said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Recep Çavuş said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Yiğit boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for m'mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Yiğit," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Recep Çavuş said, "guess that's everyone. Hikmet Dede make it?"

"Here," a voice said, and Recep Çavuş nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Recep Çavuş cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready? He called. "Now I'll read the names - heads of the families first - and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions; most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Recep Çavuş raised one hand high and said, "Adem." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi, Adem," Recep Çavuş said, and Adem said, "Hi, Recep Çavuş." They grinned at one another humourlessly and nervously. Then Adem reached into the black box took out of a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Ali," Recep Çavuş said. "Sadık ... Baki."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more," Hatçe Bacı said to Elif Ana, Hasan Bey's wife, in the black row. "Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Elif Ana said.

"Kamil ... Nusret."

"There goes my old man," Hatçe Bacı said. She held her breath while her husband Nusret went forward.

"Dünder," Recep Çavuş said, and Naciye went steadily to the box while one of the women said, "Go on, Naciye," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next," Elif Ana said. She watched while Hayri Bey came around from the side of the box, greeted Recep Çavuş gravely, and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hands, turning them over and over nervously. Naciye and her two sons stood together, Naciye holding the slip of paper.

"Hayrettin ... Murat."

"Get up there, Murat," Kader Teyze said, and the other people near her laughed.

"Cemil."

"They do say," Adem said to Hikmet Dede, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Hikmet Dede snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work anymore, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Recep Çavuş up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries," Havva, Adem's wife, said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Hikmet Dede said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Mahmut." And Bora watched his father go forward. "Osman ... Atilla."

"I wish they'd hurry," Naciye said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Naciye said.

Recep Çavuş called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called. "Hikmet Dede."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Hikmet Dede said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Yiğit." The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Yiğit," and Recep Çavuş said, "Take your time, son."

"Aydm."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Recep Çavuş, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saying, "Who is it?" "Who's got it?" "Is it Dündar?" "Is it Yiğit?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Murat." "Murat Bahtsızoğlu's got it."

"Go tell your father," Naciye said to her older son.

People began to look around to see Murat. He was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Kader Teyze shouted to Recep Çavuş, "You didn't give him enough time to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair."

"Be a good sport, Kader," Hatçe Bacı called, and Elif Ana said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Kader," Murat said.

"Well, everyone," Recep Çavuş said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to done in time." He consulted his next list. "Murat," he said, "you draw for the Bahtsızoğlu family. You got any other households in the Bahtsızoğlus?"

"There's Sezgin and Burcu," Kader Teyze yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Kader," Recep Çavuş said gently. "You know that as well as anyone else."

"It wasn't fair," Kader Teyze said.

I guess not, Recep Çavuş," Murat said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family, that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for the families is concerned, it's you," Recep Çavuş said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Murat said.

"How many kids, Murat?" Recep Çavuş asked formally.

"Three," Murat said. "There's Küçük Murat, and Neriman, and little Davut, and Kader and me." "All right, then," Recep Çavuş said. "Hayri, you got their tickets back?"

Hayri Bey nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Recep Çavuş directed. "Take Murat's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Kader Teyze said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that."

Hayri Bey had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Kader Teyze was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Murat?" Recep Çavuş asked, and Murat Bahtsızoğlu, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

"Remember," Recep Çavuş said, "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Hayri, you help the little Davut." Hayri Bey took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davut," Recep Çavuş said. Davut put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper," Recep Çavuş said. Hayri, you hold it for him." Hayri Efendi took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Davut stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Neriman next," Recep Çavuş said. Neriman was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward, switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box. "Küçük Murat," Recep Çavuş said, and Murat, his face red and his feet over-large, nearly knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Kader," Recep Çavuş said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Murat," Recep Çavuş said, and Murat Bahtsızoğlu reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Neriman," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be," Hikmet Dede said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

“All right,” Recep Çavuş said. “Open the papers. Hayri, you open little Davut’s.”

Hayri Bey opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Neriman and Küçük Murat, opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

“Kader,” Recep Çavuş said. There was a pause, and then Recep Çavuş looked at Murat Bahtsızoğlu, and Murat unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

“It’s Kader,” Recep Çavuş said, and his voice was hushed. “Show us her paper, Murat.”

Murat Bahtsızoğlu went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Recep Çavuş had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the dairy-office. Murat Bahtsızoğlu held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

“All right, folks,” Recep Çavuş said. “Let’s finish quickly.”

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Hatçe Bacı selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Naciye. “Come on,” she said. “Hurry up.”

Naciye had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath, “I can’t run at all. You’ll have to go ahead and I’ll catch up with you.”

The children had stones already, and someone gave little Davut Bahtsızoğlu a few pebbles.

Kader Bahtsızoğlu was in the centre of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. “It isn’t fair,” she said. A stone hit her on the side of head.

Hikmet Dede was saying, “Come on, come on, everyone.” Adem was in front of the crowd of villagers, with Elif Ana beside him.

“It isn’t fair, it isn’t right,” Kader Teyze screamed, and then they were upon her.

## **Appendix B:**

### **PRETEST**

#### **COMPREHENSION CHECK QUESTIONS FOR THE SHORT STORY ‘THE LOTTERY’**

1. Have you read the story ‘The Lottery’? How many times?
2. How do you understand that the lottery is an important social event for the villagers?
3. What is the importance of the black box and also the black mark on the paper?
4. Why do people in the square do not listen to Mr Summers’ directions about the lottery?
5. How do people in the village see the lottery?
6. Would Old Man Warner think in the same way about the lottery if he drew the marked paper? Why / Why not?
7. Mrs. Hutchinson thinks that the lottery is not fair. Why?
8. How do you understand that the story is written in the feminist point of view? Give examples.
9. What was the aim of the lottery?
10. How do you understand that the lottery became a traditional event in the lives of the villagers?
11. Are you surprised with the end of the story? Why / Why not?

### **PRETEST**

#### **COMPREHENSION CHECK QUESTIONS FOR THE ADJUSTED FORM OF ‘THE LOTTERY’**

1. Have you read the story ‘The Lottery’? How many times?
2. Have you read the adjusted form of the story ‘The Lottery’? How many times?
3. How do you understand that the lottery is an important social event for the villagers?
4. What is the importance of the black box and also the black mark on the paper?
5. Why do people in the square do not listen to Recep Çavuş’ directions about the lottery?
6. How do people in the village see the lottery?
7. Would Hikmet Dede think in the same way about the lottery if he drew the marked paper? Why / Why not?
8. Kader Teyze thinks that the lottery is not fair. Why?
9. How do you understand that the story is written in the feminist point of view? Give examples.
10. What was the aim of the lottery?
11. How do you understand that the lottery became a traditional event in the lives of the villagers?
12. Are you surprised with the end of the story? Why / Why not?

### **POSTTEST**

#### **COMPREHENSION CHECK QUESTIONS FOR THE SHORT STORY ‘THE LOTTERY’**

1. What is the importance of the lottery in villagers’ social life?
2. What is the importance of the black box and also the black mark on the paper?
3. Why do people in the square do not listen to Mr Summers’ directions about the lottery?
4. How do people in the village see the lottery?
5. Would Old Man Warner think in the same way about the lottery if he drew the marked paper? Why / Why not?
6. Why does Mrs. Hutchinson think that the lottery is not fair?
7. What do you think the social status of women in the story is?
8. What was the aim of the lottery?
9. How long do you think the lottery dates back in the village’s history?
10. What happens to Mrs. Hutchinson in the end?

### **POSTTEST**

#### **COMPREHENSION CHECK QUESTIONS FOR THE ADJUSTED FORM OF ‘THE LOTTERY’**

1. What is the importance of the lottery in villagers’ social life?
2. What is the importance of the black box and also the black mark on the paper?
3. Why do people in the square do not listen to Recep Çavuş’ directions about the lottery?
4. How do people in the village see the lottery?
5. Would Hikmet Dede think in the same way about the lottery if he drew the marked paper? Why / Why not?
6. Why does Kader Teyze think that the lottery is not fair?
7. What do you think the social status of women in the story is?
8. What was the aim of the lottery?
9. How long do you think the lottery dates back in the village’s history?
10. What happens to Kader Teyze in the end?

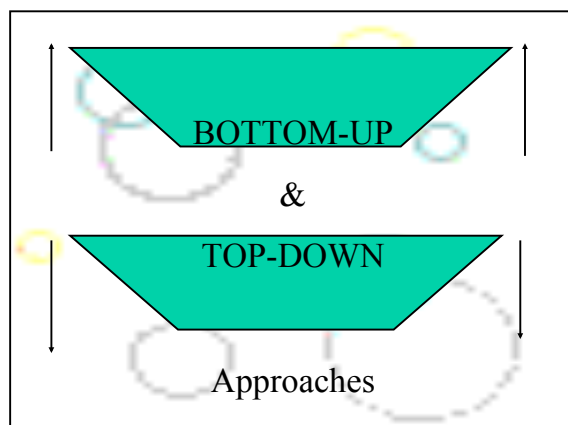
## An Investigation into the Impact of Cultural Knowledge on Reading Comprehension

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Six component elements in the fluent reading process were proposed by Grabe (1991):

- automatic recognition skills
- vocabulary and structural knowledge
- formal discourse structure knowledge
- content / world background knowledge
- synthesis and evaluation skills / strategies
- metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring



### Bottom-up Approaches

Bottom-up approaches are seen as serial models by Alderson (2000) where the process begins with the printed word, and followed by recognising graphic stimuli, decoding them to sound, recognizing words and decoding meanings.

In this traditional view, readers are passive decoders of sequential graphic-phonemic-syntactic-semantic systems, in that order, where they are expected to learn to recognise letters before they can read words (Alderson, 2000).

### Top-down Approaches

Alderson (2000) defines top-down approaches as emphasizing the importance of schemata ('schema' singular), and the readers' contribution, over the incoming text. Through schema-theoretic models, readers are expected to relate their prior experience with the text they are reading.



In this manner, activating schema, in other words, helping the readers to relate their life experiences with the text, plays an important role. Goodman (1982), for example, calls reading a 'psycholinguistic guessing game, in which readers guess or predict the text's meaning on the basis of minimal textual information, and maximum use of existing, activated, knowledge (Alderson, 2000).

The development of schema theory has attempted to account for the consistent finding that what readers know affects what they understand. Schemata are seen as interlocking mental structures representing readers' knowledge. When readers process text, they integrate the new information from the text into their preexisting schemata. More than that, their schemata influence how they recognise information as well as how they store it (Alderson, 2000).

Carrell (1983) distinguishes two different types of schemata:

### **FORMAL & CONTENT SCHEMATA**

By formal schemata Carrell means, knowledge of language and linguistic conventions, including knowledge of how texts are organised, and what the main features of particular genres are.

By content schemata Carrell means, essentially, knowledge of the world, including the subject matter of the text (Alderson, 2000).

However, content schemata can also be divided into background knowledge – i.e. knowledge, which may or may not be relevant to the content of a particular text – and subject – matter knowledge, which is directly relevant to text content and topic (Alderson, 2000).

## PILOT STUDY

### Objectives:

It was tried to be found out whether readers' performance differ through different teaching conditions and how they perform if their schemata is activated.

### Setting

The pilot study was conducted in the English Language Teaching Department at Faculty of Education and in the English Language and Literature Department at Faculty of Science and Literature of Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University with four third year classes.

### Participants

73 students participated in this study and 71 of them were taken into consideration. Below are the details about the participants.

Department	Class	Females	Males	Total	Out of the study	Taken into consideration
ELT	Daytime 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class B	17	5	22	1	21
ELT	Evening 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class A	14	4	18	0	18
ELT	Evening 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class B	13	8	21	0	21
ELL	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	10	2	12	1	11
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>71</b>

### Materials & Instrumentation

The Lottery by Shirley Jackson was chosen as it allowed Turkification. It was nativized (Alptekin, 2002) by being changed, adding, and also deleting cultural clues of it. Following are the examples about nativization of the short story.

The original story takes place in a small town or village, the population of which is about three hundred. In the adjusted form of the story the readers read about a village around Çanakkale. It can easily be understood that the story takes place around Çanakkale because of the wind blowing through Dardanelles.

In the original story, there is a description of a man who conducts the lottery. In the adjusted form, he is called as 'Recep Çavuş' because 'çavuş' – that means 'sergeant' in Turkish - is a rank in the army and as for joining the army has vital importance for Turks here 'çavuş' refers for the authority.



In the original story Old Man Warner is the oldest man in the village. In the adjusted form 'Hikmet Dede' takes his place. Here 'Hikmet' represents his background knowledge about the lottery and also his assumptions about giving up the lottery and also 'Dede' represents his age.

In the original story there is a boy named 'Dickie Delacroix' and the villagers pronounce the surname as 'Dellacroy'. In the adjusted form his name is changed as 'İlker Kibritçioğlu' and the surname is pronounced as 'Kirbitçi', which is a very common problematic sound for most of uneducated people in Turkey.

#### The first paragraph of the original story

The morning of June 27<sup>th</sup> was clear and sunny, with fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were some many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26<sup>th</sup>, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

#### The first paragraph of the adjusted story

The morning of June 27<sup>th</sup> was clear and sunny, with fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The wind blowing through Dardanelles was caressing the warm bodies of the villagers who began to gather in the square where the villagers sell their products to the foreign merchants. There were two cafes in the square in one where old men of the village meet and chat whole day and in the other where the younger ones meet and play cards and watch football matches on a large screen. It was around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26<sup>th</sup>, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the olds to get the mosque and the others to play cards.

#### Data Assessment

An answer key was prepared for the post tests and all the assessments were done in accordance with the answer key. There were ten questions in post tests and each correct answer was given ten points. During the assessing process following points were taken into consideration:

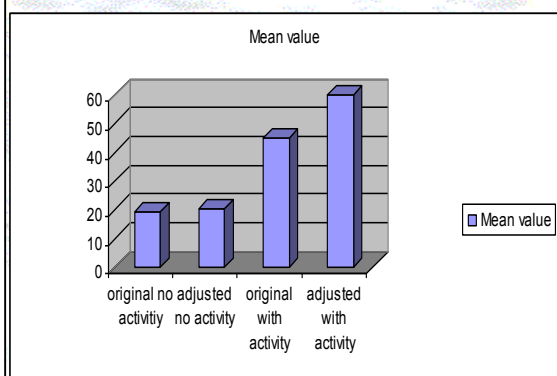
- \* Students were evaluated for their comprehension of the short story.
- \* Grammatical mistakes were ignored.
- \* To provide inter rater reliability the answer key had to be followed and the names of the students should not be checked before completing the evaluation process.

**Procedures**

Four groups were formed. The first group was taught by original short story without activities where the second one was taught by nativized story without activities. The third group was taught by original short story with activities where the fourth one was taught by nativized story with activities.

<b>GROUP 1</b>	<b>GROUP 3</b>
ORIGINAL SHORT STORY NO READING ACTIVITY	ORIGINAL SHORT STORY WITH READING ACTIVITIES
<b>GROUP 2</b>	<b>GROUP 4</b>
ADJUSTED SHORT STORY NO READING ACTIVITY	ADJUSTED SHORT STORY WITH READING ACTIVITIES

**Findings and Discussion:**



As expected, 'adjusted with activity group' outperformed the other groups as their schemata got activated through Turkification of the short story and supported by reading activities done in the classroom.

This group was followed by 'original with activity group' as they read the story with the help of the pre, while, and post reading activities.

So it is not wrong to claim that schema activation should be supported by reading activities, otherwise readers' schemata will not be activated just by adjusting the reading texts. As 'adjusted no activity group' did not have any reading activities, they could not have the chance of relating their preliminary knowledge with the text they read. It is clear that reading activities play a very important role in reading comprehension.

**Suggestions:**

- It is obvious that activating schema has vital importance in reading comprehension, so activate your readers' schemata.
- If schema activation period is supported by pre, while, and post reading activities your readers will better understand the text, so complement your lessons with reading activities.
- Foreign cultural knowledge may prevent readers to understand the text, so try to make connections between the foreign and the native culture.
- Schema activation is not valid only for advanced learners, but it is valid for all learners; so do not hesitate to activate beginners' or intermediates' schemata. It will work. ©
- Help yourself! Take it easy by nativizing the short stories.
- If you are developing materials, take the readers' schemata into consideration.
- Do not give up! Nativizing a short story does not mean rewriting it, but it is as hard as writing a short story.

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