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Focus group method for examaining the reading habits of high-level readers

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The state of reading to meet a person's needs develops over time, and this habit becomes a part of the person's life. In this study, a focus group interview was the preferred method of qualitative research. High-level readers who read more than 30 books a year were included in the study. Even though they read about 30 to 100 books a year, they still think they should improve in some respects. Their reading habits were acquired at an early age from a role model or by the encouragement of people around them. When a person feels the need to read, the habit starts to be acquired internally, but it is during later stages (high school and university period) that habits are solidified. According to this study, the most important factor in gaining reading habits are the surrounding people (parents, relatives, teachers, and friends). Moreover, it is determined that the fact that each of the participants has different experiences, opinions, and feelings about reading and that their reading orientations, desires, and expectations and the discovery of their world of meaning make them high-level readers.

Key words: reading habit, focus group interview, high-level reader.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the process of making sense of a printed or visual message with the help of the mind. According to Özdemir (2007), reading is the perception of printed or written words through our sensory organs, which in turn interpret, understand, and comment on them. According to Demirel (1999), the reading process consists of the understanding of various movements and written symbols with visual and auditory organs. According to Anderson et al. (1985), they posited that reading encompasses the intricate process of synthesizing meaning from written textual materials, a multifaceted skill that necessitates the harmonization of various interconnected sources of information.

According to Güneş (2009), the act of reading is characterized as an active endeavor in which the reader actively forges novel interpretations by amalgamating the textual information with pre-existing knowledge. During the act of reading, the reader engages in exploration to discern the significance of the text, subsequently proceeding to interpret and rearticulate its content. This cognitive operation of reading comprises a multifaceted process encompassing several cerebral

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activities, including visual perception, cognitive processing, vocalization, comprehension, and cognitive structuring.

Reading is a physiological process when it comes to visualization and vocalization. Conversely, it is also a spiritual process when it relates to comprehension. The act of reading does not occur without an effective connection between the sensory organs and the mind, because the psychological movement is under the influence of the senses (Göğüş, 1978). While some researchers define reading, others try to explain it by comparing it to something.

In accordance with Thorndike's (1917) perspective, reading comprehension shares similarities with the process of solving a mathematical problem. It entails the careful selection of pertinent elements within the text and their subsequent integration in a manner that accurately reflects their relationships, assigning the appropriate degree of significance to each of these converging factors. Every word within a paragraph exerts an impact on the cognitive faculties, necessitating the reader to engage in a series of mental operations that encompass selection, inhibition, modulation, emphasis, correlation, and organization, all of which are guided by the individual's cognitive predisposition, purpose, or specific cognitive requirements. These assertions underscore the notion that merely vocalizing the words is insufficient for a comprehensive understanding of the material being read. Rather than vocalizing, to ensure understanding what is being read, many mental processes need to be engaged, which result in an understanding process. Contrastingly, Anderson et al. (1985) draw a parallel between reading and the orchestration of a symphony. This analogy conveys three significant insights. Firstly, akin to a symphonic performance, reading is a holistic endeavor. In other words, while the sub-skills of reading, such as letter recognition and word identification, can be dissected and examined individually, they do not constitute reading in isolation. It can be contended that genuine reading transpires when all these components are harmoniously amalgamated in a coherent and integrated manner. Secondly, proficiency in reading, much like the mastery of musical instruments, necessitates extensive and sustained practice. It indeed unfolds as a lifelong pursuit. Thirdly, akin to the interpretation of a musical note, there can exist multiple interpretations of a given text. The interpretation is contingent upon the reader's prior experiences, the reading's specific purpose, and the contextual backdrop within which the reading transpires (Anderson et al., 1985).

Güneş (2009) delineates this process as follows: the act of reading commences with the identification of lines, letters, or symbols within the text. Subsequently, attention is directed towards these elements, leading to the recognition of words and the comprehension of

sentences. Following this initial phase, the reader engages in a discernment process where information deemed pertinent and intriguing is singled out from the sentences and paragraphs. The chosen information undergoes a series of cognitive operations, including but not limited to ranking, categorization, association, inquiry, analysis/synthesis, and evaluation. The information, once processed in this manner, is then integrated with the reader's pre-existing knowledge and subjected to reinterpretation. Physical and mental characteristics, as well as internal and external motivations, as indicated by Güneş (2009), dominate people's realization of the reading process.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), internally motivated behaviors that meet innate psychological needs for competence and autonomy, performed outside of interest, are prototypes of self-determination behaviors. Externally motivated behaviors-those that are carried out because they have some separable consequences-can vary in the degree of representing the right to self-determination. Internalization and integration are processes in which externally motivated behaviors are more self-determinant (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Dökmen (1990) states that several needs enable people to be interested in books and reading. Dökmen outlines these needs and the sources of motivation for reading as the following: to have fun, to develop mentally, to strengthen attitudes, to acquire new knowledge, to organize old knowledge, and to use it as a psychological defense mechanism. In the study, it is seen that internal and external motivations dominate people's orientation to reading.

In multifarious studies, it has been emphasized that reading has certain goals. Reading serves a purposeful function, driven by the reader's specific intent, whether it pertains to leisure, information acquisition, research, or other objectives. Reading with a defined purpose serves as a motivating factor, a pivotal component of effective reading proficiency. The act of reading is interactive in nature, drawing upon the reader's reservoir of background knowledge. Moreover, reading inherently involves comprehension, as the reader typically anticipates a level of understanding from the material being read. Furthermore, reading exhibits adaptability, as the reader deploys a repertoire of strategies to optimize the reading process (Grabe, 1991). Smith (1967) delineates that individuals, whether classified as proficient or less proficient readers, engage in reading for a multitude of purposes, encompassing sources of enjoyment, intellectual challenges, utilitarian needs, socioeconomic requisites, vocational or avocational interests, personal and social necessities, problem-solving endeavors, spiritual or religious quests, and personal intellectual stimulation. It is possible to argue that internal and external motivations are also

influential here.

Francis et al. (2005) expound upon the findings of the Rand Reading Study Group's report (2002), elucidating the three overarching domains characterizing the outcomes of reading comprehension. Firstly, the domain of "knowledge" encompasses proficient comprehension of textual content, the seamless integration of newfound information with pre-existing knowledge structures, and the discerning appraisal of the presented information. Secondly, the domain of "application" pertains to the practical utility of acquired knowledge when it is employed to address real-world problems and tasks. Lastly, the domain of "engagement" signifies the reader's active involvement with the ideas, experiences, and stylistic elements embedded within the text (Francis et al., 2005: 369).

In his comprehensive meta-analysis of research pertaining to reading proficiency in both primary and secondary languages, Grabe (1991) delineates the essential domains of knowledge and competencies requisite for a proficient reader. These encompass:
1. Proficiency in automatic recognition skills.
2. Proficiency in vocabulary and structural knowledge.
3. Competence in understanding formal discourse structures.
4. Possession of extensive content and world background knowledge.
5. Competence in employing synthesis and evaluation skills and strategies.
6. Proficiency in metacognitive knowledge and skills, including monitoring one's own reading processes. In the literature, there are basically two types of reader-related research: poor readers and good readers.

Semerci (2002) conducted a survey to determine the reading habits of students in the physical education and sports department regarding the use of the library, reading via the Internet, leisure reading, reading periodicals, not reading books outside the courses, and the most popular genre of book. Although there is no distinction in the level of reading when selecting the students to participate, the conclusion that students do not read in the study indicates that poor readers made up the participants.

Yılmaz et al. (2009) surveyed 104 students at the faculties of medicine and fine arts about their reading habits. The survey contains information such as how they obtain the book to read, how often they read books, when they last bought books, and how often they use the library. Among numerous findings, it is found that students had a poor reading habit in general. While more than half of the study participants do not read books, very few (8%) read 2 or more books a month. Much of the research depicts poor readers.

Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) conducted an investigation into the leisure reading behaviors of

urban adolescents. They administered a survey to a cohort of 715 students, characterized by having some of the lowest reading proficiency scores within the school district. The comprehensive eighth-grade Reading Status Assessment outcomes revealed that 68% of these students achieved reading scores categorized as below basic, 23% attained basic scores, while 9% demonstrated proficient reading scores. Importantly, the study cohort primarily comprised individuals with limited reading proficiency.

Anderson et al. (1986) examined how much reading school children do. One hundred fifty-five fifth-graders filled in forms about how many minutes they spent each day doing various out-of-school activities. According to this study, most children usually read a little or not at all.

Arıcı (2008) conducted a survey of 110 students to primarily identify young people who do not like to read first, and therefore read little or not at all. Later, the study utilized the views on reading habits of 23 students who did not like to read and tried to reveal why they did not like this activity, the elements that affected their dislike, and their relationship with family members and friends.

Hall's (2010) research indicates that secondary school students in U.S. educational institutions face challenges as readers, as they exhibit difficulties and deficiencies in the requisite reading skills necessary for comprehending texts effectively, fulfilling reading-related assignments, and acquiring subject matter knowledge. The researcher posited that enhancing the comprehension capabilities of struggling readers could be achieved through the provision of targeted skills and strategic training by subject teachers, coupled with consistent opportunities for reading and text-based discussions.

Strommen and Mates (2004) found that young people in their study group, who were identified as not-readers from among sixth-graders, lacked reading skills. Their dislike of reading was examined via interviews. Stanovich (1986) also examined the concepts of reading disability and reading failure while focusing on the less skilled reader in his study. In addition, numerous studies (Beech and Harding, 1984; Jampolsky, 1951; Crisp, 1950; Stanovich, 1988; Plessas and Petty, 1962) focused on the poor reader.

In a certain number of the studies conducted with poor readers, opinions about whether they can be good readers were also reported or attempts were made to prove this through people who had accomplished it.

Magnusson and Naucler (1990) stated, as an answer to the question of whether a good reader would remain a good reader and a poor reader would remain a poor one, that good readers in the first grade have the chance to remain good readers; however, some of the children who were poor readers in the first

grade have the risk to remain poor readers, although some could improve. They also asserted that reading development is not related to what is done at school but to linguistic and metalinguistic levels of the children before schooling.

In the study conducted by Barone and Barone (2016), a teacher implemented a curriculum requiring fifth-grade students to undertake the task of reading 50 books over the course of a year. The primary expectation was for students to read and document the books they completed, without the imposition of additional obligations such as book reports, projects, examinations, or incentives following their reading endeavors. After a year of this program, these fifth-grade students exhibited a transformation into what is conventionally deemed proficient readers. This transformation occurred gradually, considering that a significant number of students had not previously completed an entire book before embarking on this initiative. Importantly, as they engaged in reading, they were also able to effectively apply the strategies and skills imparted by their instructors (Barone and Barone, 2016).

Baumann and Koch (1985) tell a similar success story. In their scholarly article titled "A Yearlong Journey with Kim: Transitioning from Non-reader to Proficient Reader," the authors offer a case study involving an eighth-grade female student. This study investigates her progress following a year of unconventional remedial reading instruction, characterized by an approach that treated her as a proficient reader rather than one with reading disabilities. The implementation of a meaning-oriented program tailored to her needs yielded a notable improvement in her reading skills, marking a distinct contrast to the prior seven years of remedial interventions, which had failed to yield any measurable progress in her reading proficiency.

Krashen and McQuillan (1998) reviewed research showing that children and adults can be good readers in later years, even if they are not in the early years of elementary school. Consequently, they observe that the proposition that once a weak reader always a bad reader is not necessarily correct. People can become good readers later by reading a lot about everything that interests them; the act of repeated reading makes them good readers. Thus "once a good reader, always a good reader."

In several studies, no reader distinction was observed. Dökmen (1990) applied a reading habits survey, a reading skill test, a reading interest scale, and a library usage survey in his research with high school and university students. The reading habits survey is about the genre, the number of books read per week and per month, and the reasons for not reading enough books. However, this study focused on the level of relationships with other scales and surveys, rather than examining these reasons.

According to findings reported by Deniz (2015), 117 among 382 students read 12 to 20 books a year, 100 students read 6 to 11 books, 58 students read 1 to 5 books, 86 students read 21 books and more a year, and 21 students read no books, indicating that 53% are good, 26% are moderate, and 15% are weak readers. It was also found that 5.5% of the students did not have a reading habit. This is also a study conducted without any distinction among readers.

Aydin Yılmaz (2006), in a study that examined cases of insufficient reading habits among teacher candidates, stated that 64.1% of teacher candidates read 6 to 20 books per year and 20.9% read more than 21 books per year. It is seen that the great majority of the participants in the study are intermediate readers.

An examination of research focusing on proficient readers reveals an emphasis on articulating the traits and attributes of adept readers rather than conducting empirical investigations. According to Anderson et al. (1985), reading is a cognitive process wherein textual information and the reader's pre-existing knowledge interact synergistically to generate meaning. Proficient readers adeptly amalgamate the information within the text with their existing cognitive schema. Skillful reading, as posited by Anderson et al. (1985) is characterized by constructive engagement, fluency, strategic acumen, intrinsic motivation, and a lifelong commitment to the pursuit of reading. Hall (2010) delineates a set of characteristics typifying proficient readers, which includes their capacity to monitor comprehension, address comprehension challenges, employ comprehension strategies, demonstrate proficient reading fluency, solicit assistance from others, engage in reflective contemplation concerning their strategic choices, persevere until they attain comprehensive understanding of texts, actively participate in classroom discussions, and engross themselves in the reading and subsequent discussions. Additionally, proficient readers exhibit an inherent interest in learning and are intrinsically motivated to engage with textual materials.

Smith (1954) in his study, which describes, through research, that good readers think critically, first emphasizes that there must be a large number of concepts that can be used to give meaning to language symbols, a prerequisite for a high level of understanding of linguistic meanings. Second, one has to have the tendency, habit, and ability to use higher thinking processes and adapt them to different content and purposes; and third, which should probably be the first, Smith thinks that one should be comfortable in language expression and have a comprehensive meaningful vocabulary (Smith, 1954).

Reading and reading habits represent distinct concepts. Initially, the process of aligning one's reading

endeavors with personal needs evolves gradually over time, eventually culminating in the incorporation of this habit into an individual's lifestyle. Experiences, environment, and time are very important in acquiring reading habits.

The majority of studies were conducted with poor readers. It is observed that the studies examined focus on the lack of reading habits and the causes of this condition. Good readers, on the other hand, are only expressed in research in terms of their characteristics. Research on good readers is almost nonexistent. Loos (1952) emphasizes that there is hope for many poor readers. Anderson and Pearson (1984) state that solutions will naturally present themselves when the problems of weak readers are correctly identified. Thus, cannot the way to find this solution be to examine how good readers got to this level? Do not educators always say that the good, not the bad, should be taken as an example. This suggests the following question: how did individuals with a reading habit acquire it? Accordingly, in the present study it was aimed to reveal the characteristics of people who have acquired the habit of reading with regard to their reading skills. For this purpose, answers to the following research questions were sought:

1. What are the reading time preferences of the participants and their reasons for these preferences?
2. What reading environments do the participants prefer?
3. What are the genres preferred by the participants and their reasons for these preferences?
4. What do the participants pay attention to when choosing the work they will read?
5. What are the books that have left a mark on the lives of the participants and the reasons for their influence?
6. What are the factors that affect the participants' reading skills?
7. How did the participants acquire their reading habits?
8. What are the methods that the participants use when reading?
9. How do the participants evaluate themselves as readers?
10. What are the participants' views on how the reading habit is formed?
11. What is affected by having a reading habit, according to the participants?

METHODS

Research design

This study is a phenomenological research, which is among the qualitative approaches, as it attempts, through the participants' experience, to describe all aspects of the reading habit of people who have acquired this habit. According to Cresswell (2006),

phenomenological work defines the common sense of several people's experiences related to a phenomenon or concept, and the data collection process usually involves interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon (Cresswell, 2006). Therefore, a focus group interview was conducted to describe the phenomenon of the reading habit.

Focus group interviews are useful for researching people's knowledge and experience and can be used to investigate not only what people think, but how they think and why they think so without reaching a compromise. Focus group interviews are not problem-solving sessions. Unlike a series of one-to-one interviews, in the focus group, participants can express additional comments and thoughts beyond their original responses as they listen to the comments of others. However, participants do not need to agree on any consensus, nor do they need to conflict with each other (Kitzinger, 1995; Burgess, 1996; Patton, 2015; Cameron, 2005; Liamputtong, 2011; Gibbs, 2012).

Furthermore, the idea behind using the focus group method is that group discussions can help people discover and explain their views in a way that is not possible in one-to-one interviews. The focus groups method often touches on points that cannot be achieved by other methods and reveals the dimensions of the concept in a way that other data collection methods cannot. Group work also helps researchers use different forms of communication that people use in their daily interactions, such as jokes, anecdotes, and discussion (Kitzinger, 1995).

Participants

The purposive sampling method was used in this study. As Cresswell (2006) indicated, in phenomenological research, participants must be carefully selected to be individuals who have experienced the phenomenon at hand. Using the criteria of the American Library Association (ALA, 1978), the following question was asked to the 173 teacher candidates: How many books do you read in a year? Later, 32 people from among those who read more than 30 books a year were selected.

In the literature, it was seen that the number of participants in focus group interviews ranged from 4 to 8 (Kitzinger, 1995), from 6 to 10 (Patton, 2015; Cameron, 2005), from 4 to 12 (Hollander, 2004), and from 8 to 12 (Fern, 1982).

With the smallest group comprising 4 individuals and the largest group comprising 12, Cameron (2005) states that fewer than 4 participants in a group will limit discussion, while more than 10 participants will restrict individual contributions. Fallon and Brown (2002) suggest that the recommendations for group size vary from 4 to 12 members and from 4 to 8 members, with 8 often being considered ideal. According to Fern (1982) also, the best group size is 8 people.

Considering these factors, it was deemed preferable to construct groups comprising eight individuals for the purpose of our research. There were a total of four groups, each consisting of eight participants, all of whom maintained an annual reading habit exceeding 30 books.

The initial phase of the study encompassed the examination of the first group comprising eight participants, while the subsequent implementation of the primary research application was extended to the remaining three groups, totaling 24 participants. The participants selected for the focus group interviews fell within the age range of 19 to 23 years. Among these, four participants were 19 years old, four were 20 years old, eleven were 21 years old, three were 22 years old, and two were 23 years old.

Furthermore, the gender distribution within the sample comprised seventeen female participants and seven male participants.

Research instruments

To reveal all aspects of reading habits, the literature was searched, and a question pool was created by the researcher by writing the questions in line with the subject of the study. Questions were aim to determine opinions and experiences rather than the level of knowledge of participants.

All of the questions for the research were open-ended. As Kitzinger (1995) points out, open-ended questions help to enhance the group dynamics while the participants describe their own experiences, allowing the study to be conducted from unexpected perspectives.

Merton and Kendall (1946) divided focus group discussions into the three following groups: unstructured questions (stimulus and response free), semi-structured questions, and structured questions (stimulus and response structured). Furthermore, in accordance with the findings of Merton and Kendall's study in 1946, a partially structured approach to questioning, rather than one that is entirely unstructured, has proven to be more productive and effective. This approach involves formulating questions that are moderately structured but not overly so. Therefore, semi-structured questions were used in the present study. Conversely, as Cameron (2005) suggests, when employing a pre-determined question or thematic hierarchy, it may be judicious to grant the group the autonomy to concentrate on pivotal discussion areas. In instances where the group exhibits reticence, researchers may find it necessary to introduce supplementary questions and prompts as a means to elicit information and stimulate discourse. These considerations should be factored into the preparatory phase of the research process.

In the current study, a set of ten semi-structured questions, pre-determined prior to the focus group interviews, were employed. Following the interview with the initial group of eight participants, a comprehensive discussion and assessment were conducted, encompassing the interview questions, the overall atmosphere of the session, and the duration of the study. Subsequently, for the primary research groups, a total of eleven semi-structured questions were employed.

Data collection

Before the focus group interview, we prepared name badges for the participants and ensured there were enough tables and chairs in the meeting room. Participants were provided with name badges, paper, and pencils at the start of the interview. With the group's approval, the interviews was recorded using both voice and video recorders. The focus group interviews were conducted at a round table in a quiet meeting room, following Cameron's (2005) recommendation that participants should sit facing each other. Additionally, food and beverages were placed on the tables. As Kitzinger (1995) stated, a comfortable environment, refreshing drinks, and sitting in a circle will help to create the right atmosphere. Therefore, before the study was conducted this environmental setting was achieved.

Hollander (2004) states that the interviews are often recorded by audio or video devices for transcription and analysis. In the present research, three recording devices (two voice recorders and one camera) were used during the focus group interview. Video recordings were taken to determine non-verbal behaviors and to avoid problems in determining the order of the speakers.

In the present research, 3 focus group interviews were conducted, each involving 8 participants. It was reported in the literature that focus group interviews could take around 1 to 2 h (Cameron, 2005; Patton, 2015; Kitzinger, 1995; Liamputtong, 2011; Gibbs, 2012). All interviews lasted between 110 and 120 minutes. All interviews were completed within 9 days.

As Fern (1982) states, moderators are very important for a focus group study. Moderators have many tasks in a focus group interview (Burgess, 1996; Gibbs, 2012; Liamputtong, 2011). In the present study, all the issues that the moderators have to take into consideration were investigated and were applied during the study.

The moderator informed the participants about the topic to be discussed before the interview started. In order to prevent any problems that could arise during the focus group interview, it was stated that everyone had a right to speak once in the first round of the study and if they had any other opinion to be discussed it could be expressed in the second round, giving priority to those that did not participate in the first round. In the meantime, if anything came to mind, it could be noted on the paper given out.

Each group member was given the right to speak. The moderators stated that there is not a single right answer and that their thoughts are important and that the answers may vary. They were warned about interrupting other participants or talking out of turn. If requested there could be short breaks during the study.

First of all, individuals were asked to introduce themselves and the questions were asked starting from the easy questions progressing towards the most thought-provoking ones. Even if the moderator's opinion was asked, he or she did not respond. The moderator made eye contact with the speaker and listened to the answer. After asking the questions, the participants were good listeners, and they did not interrupt while others were explaining their opinions. The participants were asked not to respond to the questions immediately and were given time to think when necessary.

The moderator ensured that all questions were addressed by participants and probed for the opinions that were not clearly expressed. The moderator completed the focus group interview by thanking the participants. Moreover, the moderator took extreme caution regarding the nondirectionality, specificity, range, depth, and personal context criteria that Merton and Kendall (1946) stated. During the entire process, the moderator did not express any judgment about the participants' answers, respected the participants, was open-minded, made good observations, took notes, and was patient.

Cameron (2005) and Gibbs (2012) state that an observer should help the moderator. An observer in the research helped the researcher by sitting at equal distance to all the participants, helping the moderator by organizing and setting up the recording devices, writing down the order of the participants, and taking note of important points that the moderators selected based on question numbers.

Data analysis

According to Patton (2015), the objective of the focus group interview is to obtain high-quality data from people that can evaluate their own opinions within the context of the views of others. According to Fern (1982), the output of the focus group is better than that of individual interviews.

A total of 6 hours of interviews were recorded. It took about 30 hours to transcribe the data. The interviews were written in Times New Roman and font size 12. A total of 110 pages of data were obtained in total: 38 pages from the first group, 37 pages from the second group, and 35 pages from the third group. All transcripts were read and subjected to content analysis. The software NVivo 11 Pro was used for data analysis.

Surveys represent a suitable means to gather quantitative data aimed at ascertaining the prevalence of specific pre-

Table 1. Participants' reading time preferences and reasons.

Reading time (f)	Reason (f)
Daytime (5)	Reading books for knowledge (1)
	Complete emptiness of the mind (1)
Evenings (3)	Having daily chores in the morning (1)
	Being able to listen to music (1)
	Being able to conduct research related to the book when necessary (1)
Before going to sleep (12)	Quietude of the environment (2)
	Being able to edit what is read in one's mind when sleeping (1)
	Having finished all chores (1)
	Feeling comfortable (1)
	Having an open mind (1)
	Emptying the mind (1)
Times when emotions are most intense (2)	Enjoying the books at those times the most (1)
Not having a special period (2)	Being able to read any time when there is an opportunity (1)

established viewpoints on a given subject. Conversely, focus groups serve as a more effective approach for delving into the intricate processes underlying the formation of these viewpoints. Consequently, in instances where surveys consistently reveal disparities between knowledge and behavior, it is only through qualitative methods like focus groups that these gaps can be bridged and the underlying reasons elucidated, as proposed by Kitzinger (1995:302). For this reason, in contrast to the other qualitative methods, the views of the participants are not digitized in focus group interviews. In the present study, reading habits were described based on the participants' explanations rather than numerical expressions. Codes, themes, and frequency values as the only numerical data were included in the presentation of the data.

The primary benefit inherent to focus groups lies in the prospect of observing interactions centered around specific sets of attitudes and experiences. Consequently, the data emanating from such interactions possess substantial value and warrant meticulous scrutiny, as advocated by Morgan and Spanish (1984). In this regard, the video recordings used in the focus group interviews were also taken into consideration in the analysis of the data.

As Patton (2015) points out, in any study, a series of different focus interviews are conducted to achieve different perspectives and to increase the reliability of the resulting pattern. For this reason, three focus group interviews were conducted to determine the different perspectives of the participants and to ensure the reliability of the research designed.

According to Patton (2015), phenomenological analysis aims at understanding and clarifying the meaning, structure, and essence of the experience of a person or a group of persons regarding a phenomenon. Accordingly, the phenomenological data analysis steps mentioned by Cresswell (2006) and Moustakas (1994) were used in the analysis of the data. Based on data from the research questions, interview transcripts were reviewed by two field experts, and important phrases, sentences, and quotes were highlighted. Later, these expressions were turned into codes and meaning sets were developed under themes. Both experts study comprehension skills. One of the experts is an associate professor in the field of language training and the other has a PhD in this field.

Coding similarities and differences were calculated by comparing the encodings performed by the two experts. According to the recurrence percentile formula (Reliability =

Number of agreements / Number of agreements + disagreements) (Miles and Huberman, 1994) the reliability of the interview analysis was 0.91. After that, the differences were discussed and minimized. Furthermore, based on Krueger's (2002) recommendations, a one-month break was given after the first data analysis and to maintain consistency the data were re-evaluated one more time.

RESULTS

Here in the results section the questions that were asked in the focus group interviews and the findings related to each question are given.

How many hours per day do you read books? Do you have a particular period you prefer?

The reading time of the participants varied between half an hour and 2.5 h a day. Five of the participants stated that they read books for 30 min to 1 h, 8 for 1 to 1.5 h, 3 for 1.5 to 2 h, and 8 for 2 to 2.5 h. The emerging themes regarding the reading periods are daytime, evening, before going to sleep, when emotions are at their most intense, and no special time. The period that most of the participants preferred to read was at night before going to sleep. In this case, it can be argued that it is effective to reduce daily routines and devote time to oneself and quietude of the environment (Table 1).

The sentences for the theme "when emotions are most intense" are as follows: *"I usually read an average of 2 to 2.5 hours. There is not a fixed period for reading, because I usually prefer to read when my feelings are most intense. I enjoy books more at those times."* (1). The expressions of the participants who prefer to read before bed are as follows: *"I usually read an average of 1 hour per day. I read before I go to bed so that I can create images in my mind."* (3), *"I'm a night owl. I can't do*

Table 2. Themes and codes for participants' reading environment preferences.

Theme	Code (f)
Audio	Quiet environment (12)
	Places neither too quiet nor too noisy (2)
Light	Dim environment (4)
	Candlelight (1)
	Luminous (2)
Area	Where one is alone (6)
	Library (4)
	Home (2)
	Places where people are few (2)
	Own room (5)
	Small, narrow, and confined spaces (1)
	Places with a table (2)
	Tidy environments (1)
	Intercity buses (1)
	No area discrimination (2)
	Bed (2)

much in the morning. I start at eight p.m. and continue reading until seven o'clock in the morning. I have the following criteria. One has to read at least 250 pages a day. No matter what you read, it's of benefit to you." (19). There are those who prefer to read during the day as well as at night. *"Unlike others, for me, early daytime reading is preferable, especially around seven o'clock in the morning, because my head is empty as I'm waking up. Nighttime reading before sleeping does not satisfy me that much."* (20).

Is there any place you prefer for reading? If so, where is it?

Most of the participants stated that they have a preferred place for reading. Accordingly, three themes emerged: audio, light, and area (Table 2).

It seems that audio and area themes stand out in the participants' preferences regarding the reading environment. Among all encodings, the area preference that comes first is silent environments. After that come the place where one is alone, the person's own room, and the library. When the codes are considered, it appears that people prefer environments where they can focus on the book.

Most participants prefer quiet environments to read books: *"I believe that it is more efficient when I read in places where I find peace. For instance, when I read a book in a crowded environment, I can't understand the depth or the feeling of the main idea presented in the book. But when we read the book in a quiet environment that we like, we can dive into the depth of the book. Since it is a very important point to live with the book, I think*

where we read the books is very important. My preferred place can be anywhere where I am alone." (1). *"It is very important for me to have a quiet environment just as my friends mentioned because I'm distracted when I read a book. I can't give my attention to the book, and it is difficult for me to get motivated. For this reason, it is very important for me to have a quiet place to read."* (3). In addition to those who seek silence, there are also people who can read books in any environment. *"Most of my close friends see me reading everywhere whenever I have free time because I can focus no matter where I am. I can read a book even when I'm walking down the road. I read books in the toilet. I read books while cooking. There is nothing specific regarding where and when I read and when nighttime comes nobody can keep me from reading."* (19).

Do you have a preferred genre? If so, why?

The genres that the participants prefer to read are novels, short stories, essays, biographies, personal development, poetry, magazines, and newspapers. The most preferred genres are novels and essays. It was seen that some of the participants preferred to read essays while others preferred novels. The participants tried to convince each other about the importance of the genre that they think comprises essential reading (Table 3).

The participants appear to prefer novels for their feelings, while they prefer essays for their thoughts. About a third of the participants read periodicals (magazines and newspapers). Here is a sample opinion from those who prefer to read novels: *"My favorite type of material to read is novels, because I love the action. The*

Table 3. Genres preferred by the participants and their reasons.

Literary genre (n)	Reason (f)
Novel (16)	Compatibility with life (1)
	Liking event writing (1)
	Giving aesthetic pleasure (1)
	Being free of life's troubles while reading (2)
	Integrity (1)
	Feeling like you have traveled to different realms (1)
	Being long-winded (1)
	Being almost engulfing (2)
	Enriching the imagination (1)
	Finding the opportunity to think (1)
	Being a true story (1)
	Being comforting (1)
	Being fluent (1)
Short story (4)	Ending quickly because it is short (1)
	Being enjoyable (1)
	Having what is given originally (2)
	Liking event writing (1)
Essay (9)	Finding oneself in the thoughts of the author (1)
	Developing one's own thoughts (1)
	Feeling like you have met the author (1)
	Interview with the author (1)
	Learning the author's thoughts (1)
	Getting more information (2)
	Finding life there (1)
	Finding novels artificial (1)
	Making one think (1)
	Thinking that it will be of use (1)
Biography (2)	Knowing various people (1)
	Wondering about their lives (1)
Self-development (2)	Self-improvement (2)
Poetry (5)	Reading occasionally (2)
	Enjoyable (1)
	Satisfaction in terms of emotion (1)
Magazine (8)	Liking short texts and poems (1)
	Having followed authors (2)
	Exploring different places to visit (1)
	Giving pleasure from a literary point of view (2)
	Finding sentences that can be underlined (1)
	Having articles that make you think (1)
	Being long-winded, rooted (1)
	Be open to innovation (1)
Newspaper (6)	Liking columns (2)
	Liking the journalists/authors (1)
	Providing self-development (1)
	Following current events (1)

book has to have a main event and the story has to be developed around it. I love biographies or autobiographies if they are thought-provoking and informative. They attract my attention. I distract myself from the boredom of this life while reading novels." (20). Those who liked to read essays expressed their reasons

by comparing them to reading novels. The participants were mostly divided into two groups: novel lovers and essay lovers. *"I am not a novel person; I like essays. Novels don't have much effect on me, but I believe novels must be read as well. For every two essays, a novel must be read. Let's think that we are building a house. If the thoughts are the columns and the main skeleton of the house, then the novels are the doors, the paint, and the windows. But I am more interested in the philosophy. The reason for this is that I think I get more information from them and thus I am more interested in them."* (1). For some students, the genre did not matter. *"I do not have a single genre that I especially like to read. The following four genres are my favorite: novels, poetry, essays, and short stories. I read these four types alternately. If I read a novel one week, I read poems the other week, an essay and a short story in the coming weeks. I like to read thick novels, especially world classics. I do not read foreign poetry very much because it does not appeal to me. Moreover, it is very difficult to translate poetry, and I do not think that every translator can translate them properly. I love poetry, especially from Turkish literature. If you read an essay by a writer you have read before, it makes you feel as if you have met the author and therefore I love to read essays. I also like short stories as the author can present the message within 20 pages."* (12). A teacher candidate explains why he does not read newspapers and magazines thus: *"I'm not reading newspapers or magazines. Newspapers are political or present news that makes us unhappy. They often discuss news that makes us lose hope about life, so I don't read them that much."* (15).

What do you consider when choosing a book, magazine or newspaper, etc.?

Based on the responses of the participants, the themes that arise are the author, content, structure, reader, and comments. The participants pay the most attention to the author in choosing the work they will read. Every situation involving the author concerns the majority of the participants. Another prominent feature is the recommendation of the book by others. The participants listen to the advice of people whose opinions they trust (Table 4).

The views of the participant who stated that selectivity begins over time are as follows: *"Perhaps just one phrase or a combination of two or three phrases may attract my attention. Maybe a couple of phrases may make me think for hours. That's why I prefer to read all kinds of books in which I find something from my life. Each book somehow talks to the reader. This can be a lot or a little. It does not matter how much it communicates with you as long as you find something relatable within the book. But I believe that what you read doesn't matter much. Just being willing to read is enough, because although you may not find it at first, after a while, you will figure out what you enjoy. Then selectivity begins."* (1). Quite a number of the teacher candidates expressed that they pay attention to the comments. One of those views is the following: *"When selecting books, I follow the comments on them and the number sold is very important for me. I read the reviews a lot. Other than that, the writer of the book is very important. While I read a novel, I come across the next book I will read. These things are effective in my choice."* (12). There are also those who spend quite a lot of time choosing books. *"If I'm going to buy books or magazines, I spend at least one and a half or two hours. I read at least five or six pages of the books before buying them. So I'm not buying them directly without looking, or I don't decide to buy depending on my previous good experiences with the authors. Every book by an author may not be that good. I need to look at the content of each."* (20).

Is there a book that has left a mark in your life? If so, why did it affect you?

Twenty-four participants named 45 works in total. The themes created based on the reasons why books affect readers are subject, style, message, identification, and influence. The aspects of being influenced by books for candidate teachers are mostly in subject and influence themes. These are followed by the themes of style, identification, and message, in that order. When the intensity of the codes is considered, it appears that the participants are most influenced by the style of the work and the hero (Table 5).

The view of the participant who states that he was quite impressed by the subject of the book that had left a mark in his life is as follows: "The book by Harper Lee "To Kill a Mockingbird." In the book, racial discrimination and inequality and class inequality were mentioned from the perspective of a child in the south of the United States of America. I read it when the book was not popular, and this book impressed me so much. I'm very interested in this kind of book that mentions human equality, prejudice, and inequalities." (22). Six participants identified with the hero of the book. In addition, there are those who identify with the author: "Oguz Atay's "the Disconnected." This book is now synonymous with me. Oğuz Atay is a very different man. The book is heavy. Yes, you need to read very carefully to understand the book; you need to read about Oğuz Atay's life. To understand Oğuz Atay, you need to be Oğuz Atay. Why do I love it? I sometimes feel like Oguz Atay. He's also in solitude. He is in the crowd but the man cannot explain his problem, he cannot suppress it, so it is a book that tries to establish a pattern in such chaos." (24).

What are the factors that affect your reading skills?

When the elements affecting the reading skills of the

Table 4. Themes and codes related to the elements considered in the selection of the work to be read.

Theme (f)	Code (f)
Writer	Being a popular writer (1)
	Being a non-popular writer (3)
	People who have made their name in literature (1)
	Names with literary value (1)
	Liking the writer (1)
	Writer's political views (1)
	Writer's artistic views (1)
	Writer's knowledge of literature (1)
	Writer's knowledge of writing (1)
	Having writers with different views (3)
	Being the work of a master writer (1)
	Belonging to writers describing today (1)
Content	Sentences making one think (1)
	Articles about history (3)
	Containing things that will be of use in the future (1)
	Including current affairs (1)
	Being an interesting topic (2)
	Searching for expressions to underline (1)
	Finding interesting sentences when shuffling pages (2)
	Reading the first five to six pages (1)
	The first page being interesting (1)
Structure	Book cover design (4)
	Number of editions (2)
	Publisher (4)
	Genre (2)
	Short article on the back of book (2)
	Not being too voluminous (max. 400 pages) (1)
Reader	Finding one's own (1)
	Adding something to one's own (3)
	Selection by current mood (1)
Comments	Comments about the book (1)
	Being recommended (7)
	Reviews from book sites (1)
	Finding another book to read in the book one is reading (1)
	Comments on sites followed (1)

participants were divided into themes, personal features, structural features, content features, and external features emerged. The content features come to the fore the most, following personal features. Elements that come to the fore in the codes are the quietude of the environment, a person recommended the book, sharing one's loneliness with the book, impressiveness of the book, the scarcity of unknown words, and the criticism of others about the book (Table 6). One participant gave his opinion on how much the choice of correct books influences reading skills as follows: "The book that I'm reading at the moment is what affects my reading skills most. If I like that book, if it is a good book, and if I could finish that book in two days, it does not matter if it is a novel or a short story, it will encourage me to read other books by the writer or read *other books. That's why I think the book in hand can improve our reading skills."* (9). Complaining about the noise, unknown words, and the predictability of the end of the book, the teacher candidate's sentences are as follows: *"noise also bothers me. I also feel uncomfortable when there are unknown words and the only books that I stop reading in the middle are those that have many unknown words in them. To be able to guess the end of the book also affects me"* (5).

Table 5. The work that left a mark in the lives of the participants, reason to be affected and themes.

Writer / work (n)	Reason (f)	Theme
Elif Shafak / The Forty Rules of Love (1)	Taking Mewlana as subject (1)	
Erdem Bayazit / Poems (2)	Telling about people (1)	
Halikarnas Balıkçısı / Aganta Burina Burinata (1)	Telling about the sea (1)	
Harper Lee / To Kill a Mockingbird (1)	Telling about inequality (1)	
Hüseyin Nihal Atsız / Ruh Adam (2)	Merging of reality with dreams (2)	
İskender Pala / Katre-i Matem (1)	Telling about historical events (1)	Subject
İskender Pala / Od (2)	Telling about Yunus Emre (2)	
Khaled Hosseini / A Thousand Splendid Suns (2)	Telling about women (1)	
Ömer Seyfettin / Blood Money (1)	Telling about serving someone slavishly (1)	
Stefan Zweig / Chess (1)	Having an interesting subject (1)	
Yashar Kemal / Memed, My Hawk (2)	Opposition to imposition (1)	
Zülfü Livaneli / Serenad (1)	Telling about love (1)	
Chingiz Aitmatov / Jamila (1)	Having a beautiful narration (1)	
Dostoyevski / Crime and Punishment (3)	Being fluent (1)	
Hayati İnanç / Can Veren Pervaneler (1)	Having a beautiful style (1)	
İhsan Oktay Anar / Puslu Kıtalar Atlası (1)	Having a different style (1)	
Mehmet Kaplan / Kültür ve Dil (1)	Having a beautiful style (1)	
Mehmet Kaplan / Nesillerin Ruhu (1)	Having a beautiful style (1)	Style
Mustafa Kutlu / Ya Tahammül Ya Sefer (1)	Having a mystical mood (1)	
Necip Fazıl Kısakürek / Çile (1)	Having a beautiful style (1)	
Turgenyev / Fathers and Sons (1)	Having a suspenseful narration (1)	
Zülfü Livaneli / Huzursuzluk (1)	Giving a good account of events (1)	
Ahmet Şerif İzgören / Şu Hortumlu Dünyada Fil Yalnız Bir Hayvandır (1)	Providing a positive view of life (1)	
Erdal Demirkıran / Parayı Bulduğum An Alayını (1)	Teaching that one should not be biased (1)	Giving a lecture
Nüvide Gültunca Tulgar / Kendi Kutup Yıldızını Bul (1)	Giving a lecture (1)	
Reşat Nuri Güntekin / Acımak (1)	Learning that someone is different from the way they appear (1)	
Cahit Uçuk / Gümüş Kanat (1)	Identification with the hero (1)	
Chingiz Aitmatov / The First Teacher (1)	Identification with a heroic teacher (1)	
Chingiz Aitmatov / The White Ship (1)	The hero chasing his dreams (1)	
İskender Pala / Şah ve Sultan (3)	Feeling what the hero experiences (1)	
Oğuz Atay / The Disconnected (2)	Self-analogy to the author (1)	Identification
Yaşar Kemal / Yılanı Öldürseler (1)	Fascination with the woman who is the heroine (1)	
Yusuf Atılgan / The Loiterer (1)	Almost being the hero himself (1)	
Ahmet Ümit / Şeytan Ayrıntıda Gizlidir (1)	Taking a person away (1)	
Burçak Çerezcioğlu / Mavi Saçlı Kız (1)	Crying for days (1)	
Emily Bronte / Wuthering Heights (1)	Takes one to different times (1)	
Guy de Moupassant / Claire de Lune (1)	Impressiveness of the things narrated (1)	
Khaled Hosseini / The Kite Runner (1)	Being unable to escape effects (1)	
Reşat Nuri Güntekin / The Wren (1)	Being the first novel read (1)	
Sabahattin Ali / Kuyucaklı Yusuf (1)	Unexpected ending (1)	Impressiveness
Stefan Zweig / Angst (1)	Unexpected end (1)	
Stefan Zweig / Letter from an unknown woman (1)	Impressiveness of the things narrated (1)	
Tarık Buğra / Osmancık (1)	Loving historical books due to this book for the first time (1)	
Yunus Emre / Divan of Yunus Emre (1)	Impressiveness of each verse (1)	
Yusuf Atılgan / Motherland Hotel (1)	Falling into a void when the book is finished (1)	

Table 6. Themes and codes related to elements affecting participants' reading ability.

Theme	Code (f)
Personal features	Making you feel something (3)
	Finding yourself in the book (3)
	Sharing loneliness (5)
	Having no harm (1)
	Being sad (3)
	Current emotions (1)
	Choosing the right book (2)
	Buying the book (3)
	Desire to benefit from the experiences of others (2)
	Desire for self-improvement (2)
	Living in the event (1)
	Desire to discuss the book with someone else (2)
Structural features	Being on publishing paper (1)
	Being on white paper (1)
	Having an interesting cover (2)
	Font type and size (2)
Content features	Being impressive (5)
	Artistic features (1)
	Language and style (1)
	Having simple language (1)
	Having fluent words (2)
	Raising awareness (1)
	Having satisfying content (2)
	Having few unknown words (4)
	Inability to predict the end of the book (1)
	Being a good translation (2)
	Having short descriptions (1)
External features	A person recommended the book (6)
	Book reviews (1)
	Criticism of others about the book (4)
	Respect when reading a book (1)
	Quiet environment (9)

How did you acquire your reading habits?

Codings related to how the teacher candidates acquired the habit of reading are grouped under four themes: the age at which the habit of reading begins, the people who influence it, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. The ages at which the reading habit begins vary widely from 8 to 18. While some indicate that they acquired this skill at an early age, others acquired it quite late. It is not possible to suggest a particular age range. The numbers are very close. Teachers are the people who are most influential in forming a reading habit. Parents follow teachers. Some of the participants got the habit of reading through intrinsic motivation, while others had extrinsic motivation (Table 7).

Nine of the participants stated that the formation of their reading habits had been influenced by their teachers. A few examples are as follows: *"We had a teacher in junior high. Everybody would take a break between classes, but this teacher used to stay in the class and read books. I used to pay attention to him and asked myself why he is doing this, and then I started to talk to him about these books. After conversing with him a couple of times, I started to read as well."* (2). *"When I passed from fourth to fifth grade, our teacher organized a reading contest, and I read about two hundred books. My reading habit comes from this."* (23). It is also important that family members encouraged reading as well as teachers. *"We were three brothers of similar ages. Our dad motivated us by giving us gifts after each book we finished reading. As soon as we arrived home after school, we used to go straight to our rooms and read, without watching TV. I also had a math teacher in high school who used to read a lot. I used to check what she was reading and once she*

Table 7. Themes and codes for participants to acquire the habit of reading.

Theme	Code (f)
Age at which reading habit begins	8-9 years (3)
	9-10 years (2)
	10-11 age (3)
	12-13 years (3)
	13-14 years (4)
	15-16 age (2)
	16-17 years (4)
	17-18 years (3)
Influencers	Teacher (9)
	Mother (4)
	Father (4)
	Aunt (1)
	Uncle (2)
	Sister (1)
	Cousin (2)
	Friend (1)
Intrinsic motivation	Desire to guide one's future (1)
	Spending time reading books, finding nothing to do at the dormitory (1)
	Starting reading as a result of loneliness and psychological conditions (1)
	Becoming aware of the difficulty of working life and deciding to improve oneself (1)
	Thinking one should read a book after deciding to become a teacher (1)
	Feeling different as one reads (1)
	Finding one's feelings, thoughts in books (1)
Extrinsic motivation	Having a beloved teacher glued to books (1)
	Receiving a book as a gift from a teacher (2)
	Teacher's excerpts from books in class (1)
	Teachers' correct book advice (1)
	Seeing the teacher reading a book between classes (1)
	Desire to win the speed reading contest in elementary school (1)
	Reading hours with family as a child (1)
	Reading books with mother (2)
	Receiving a gift from father after finishing a book (1)
	Buying a book per week with the father (1)
	Wondering about the books read by one's father (1)
	Reading books with an aunt (1)
	Constant reading of an uncle (2)
	Having a book finishing contest with a sister (1)
	Seeing cousins read books all the time (2)
	Recommendation by a friend (1)

was done with reading the book, I used to go and get that book. So with the help of my father and my math teacher I acquired my reading habit." (9).

In addition to extrinsic motivations, there are also individuals who have acquired the habit of reading without any extrinsic motivation. *"I would also like to say that I was positively affected by others when acquiring my reading habit, but they affected me negatively. I realized by myself that I should read books. After high school, I started to work part-time. I worked for two years after* high school. Reading books was a great idea. It was not easy to work, and I realized that I should improve myself to get better jobs and thus I can say that I realized that I should read by myself." (3). While some of them take up reading with the idea of having a better life, others felt the need to find a friend in their loneliness. *"I acquired my reading habit when I started high school. I was at a boarding school, and in order not to get bored in the dormitory, I started reading. I also acquired this habit of reading with the right guidance from my teachers and*

Table 8. Themes and codes for the methods that participants use when reading.

Theme	Code (f)
Underlining	Underlining important parts (5)
	Underlining with different colored pencils (1)
	Underlining using a pen of the same color as the color on the cover of the book (2)
	Underlining using a ruler (1)
Marking	Drawing an arrow, smiley face, flower, etc. (1)
	Placing a smiley emoji if the paragraph has made one laugh, or a sad emoji if the paragraph has saddened the reader (1)
	Putting exclamation marks in important parts (1)
	Placing quotation marks at the beginning and at the end of important parts (1)
	Placing stars in corners of important parts (1)
	Placing small pieces of paper between important pages (1)
	Folding the page (1)
	Giving stars from 1 to 5 depending on how much one likes the book (1)
	Writing the date (1)
	Using a bookmark (1)
Note taking	Taking note of important parts in a notebook (8)
	Making notes in the spaces at the top and bottom of the pages (6)
	Taking notes on small sheets of paper (1)
	Writing thoughts about the book at the end of the book (1)
Reading style	Reading slowly to understand (8)
	Reading think pieces slowly (4)
	Reading think pieces aloud (1)
	Reading novels fast (4)
	Skimming from the beginning to the end of the page (1)
	Reading fast if the book is fluent (1)
	Associating with life to make it memorable (1)
Motivation	Having a tidy environment (2)
	Drinking coffee to stay awake (1)
	Using a headset (1)

also because I came across great books. First, you start to read the authors you know, and then you find other authors." (18).

Do you have specific methods for reading? What are they?

The methods that participants used when reading were collected in five themes. These are underlining, marking, note-taking, reading style, and motivation. The methods that the teacher candidates use the most are taking notes on important parts in a notebook, slow reading to understand, making notes in the spaces at the top and bottom of the pages, underlining important parts, slow reading of think pieces, and fast reading of novels (Table 8).

A participant describes the importance of underlining and taking notes during the reading process as follows. *"I usually underline the books I read, and when I see a* couplet that I like very much, I immediately take a note of it. I see benefits in underlining important phrases, and when I re-read the same book and see the phrases that were underlined, I realize how much I have changed over time. Books help you to understand yourself, and you see how much your life has changed just by checking the phrases that you previously underlined. I have many papers that I have used to take notes of essential ideas from the books I have read. I even have some here with me. If you remember the content of a book and can spontaneously talk about it, then it means you have read that book properly."* (1). Some, on the other hand, use methods to provide motivation for reading. *"For some reason, I can't read a book without drinking coffee. I keep thinking of coffee. Even when it is late at night, I drink coffee to start reading."* (7). There are also participants who read books by decorating them using emojis. *"I use colored pencils. I try to underline the phrases I like in different colors. I use emoticons, ok signs, smiley faces, flowers, etc. I also write on post-it notes in order not to*

forget the important sections. In contrast to some of my friends, I do love to draw on my books and write things on them. Some people don't even bend their books. I believe the books have to show that they have been read." (20). Some are quite meticulous about underlining and marking. *"For me, the cover color of the book and the color of the pen that I will use to mark have to be the same. Moreover, I underline the phrases using a ruler, not by my hand. I don't like folding the pages. I use post-it notes where necessary. Also, if the paragraph I liked is very long, instead of underlining the whole paragraph I put quotation marks at the beginning and the end. If the paragraph makes me laugh I put a smiley face or if it makes me sad I put a sad face, so that I can remember my feelings at that moment when I re-read the book."* (24).

Evaluate yourself as a reader?

The participants expressed positive and negative self-criticisms of themselves when evaluating what kind of readers they were. Coding was done according to the way they see themselves. The statements that stand out in their positive self-criticism are being a good reader, trying not to harm the book while reading it, being a regular reader, and thinking that they should read think pieces rather than event pieces. The expressions that stand out in their negative self-criticism are the unwillingness to read the book that teachers necessarily indicate, being an irregular reader, and not being able to read when they are tired of the book (Table 9).

For some teacher candidates reading is an almost inseparable part of their lives. *"I feel as if something is missing when I'm not reading books. I may have homework or presentations to prepare for, and there are times that I can't read, unfortunately. Then I feel like I'm missing something. It's as if I forgot to do something."* (6). Although one of the participants thinks he is a good reader, he has some concerns about the future. *"I think I'm a loyal and good reader. I get a book every month; when I do not have money, I pay by credit card. I feel discontent when I don't buy books. If I am not able to read the book right after I get it, I still read it before the end of the month. But I don't think that's enough. Because our life will not be long enough to read all the books we want. While we are reading books, there are new ones always being written. I want to devote more time to it"* (18). As a reader, there are also aspects that he likes and dislikes. *"I am an objective reader. I am not tied to any ideology. I can read any author. This is a great thing because I'm open to different perspectives. I am an irregular reader and do not have a fixed number of books I read per month. One day I read from morning to evening, the other day I read for half an hour. Do I read a lot of books? It's a lot for others, but not enough for me. The number can be increased."* (24).

How do you think the reading habit is acquired?

Participants' thoughts about the formation of the reading habit are divided into themes as 'at the request of the person' and 'thanks to others'. Codes that stand out in the 'at the request of the person' theme are shaped by intrinsic motivation, one's own will, and when one reads regularly. In the 'thanks to others' theme, the coding that stands out the most is 'thanks to the family' (Table 10).

The opinion of a teacher candidate who acquired the habit of reading on his own was as follows: *"I wasn't much of a reader in elementary school. One of the reasons why I started reading was that I was no longer satisfied with the world. I could not find what I wanted. Then I realized that others felt the same when I came across books written with the same feelings. That is why the books attracted my attention. It is loneliness that encouraged me to start reading. Silence and loneliness, together, increase the value of books a lot."* (1). He expresses the efficiency of the pros of reading in turning into a habit with the following sentences: *"I believe that the reading habit is acquired by re-reading a book that you like. Then you start to feel contented when you realize that your vocabulary is enriched and you start to express yourself more comfortably and then it becomes an addiction. You can't sleep without reading, or you do not consider a day a good day if you do not read that day."* (15).

What does a person's reading habit affect?

The situations affected by a person's having a reading habit were listed under four themes: expression, self-efficacy, thoughts/perspective, and emotions. This indicates that a reading habit affects expression, thoughts, and emotions, while also developing self-efficacy. Features that stand out in a person who has acquired a reading habit are as follows: his/her speech (diction) is smooth, he/she attracts attention with his/her knowledge, it allows one to acquire different perspectives on life, and it develops a person's thoughts (Table 11). Participants stated that reading will contribute a lot to a person. *"Reading affects our conversational skills,* understanding, and point of view. In one of our classes, we have read that a reader cannot be a bad person. The books make the readers more naive. People love to express themselves, be understanding and understandable. Therefore, we need to know how to express ourselves. Reading gives you this ability to express yourself." (5). "Reading develops us culturally. You're accumulating knowledge in a certain culture. This satisfies you. You're happy when you read a quality piece of work. I think it is very effective as a way to express ourselves and develop understanding. It allows you to express yourself by not repeating the same things over and over but sharing new topics you have learned. It also

Table 9. Themes and codes for self-evaluation as a reader.

Theme	Code (f)
Positive self-criticism	Being a good reader (6)
	Not giving up reading, feeling the need (1)
	Loving books (1)
	Being happy to start at an early age (1)
	Inability to sleep on the day one does not read a book (1)
	Buying a book by credit card even if one does not have money (1)
	Being an objective reader (1)
	Not being adherent to ideologies (1)
	Being a regular reader (2)
	Feeling restless when one does not buy a book (1)
	Thinking that one reads more since there are many books to read (1)
	Thinking that one should read think pieces rather than event pieces (2)
	Trying to avoid harming books while reading them (3)
	Feeling incomplete when one cannot read a book (1)
	Orientation to writing through reading (1)
	Devoting time to reading books, not reading just in one's free time (1)
Negative self-criticism	Inability to read another book for a while when influenced by a certain book (1)
	Feeling no regret when one goes to bed without reading a book (1)
	Inability to read when bored with the book (2)
	Inability to re-read a book (1)
	Inability to look up unknown words (1)
	Inability to read several different works at the same time (1)
	Being an irregular reader (3)
	Having days when one doesn't read books (1)
	Thinking that one has missed lots of things due to starting reading late (1)
	Thinking that one has deficiency in creativity (1)
	Not remembering a book read (1)
	Reading the books that one wants, when one should be reading books about literature (1)
	In certain cases, thinking that the book will take time to read (1)
	Considering one's power of interpretation weak (1)
	Not wanting to read the book necessarily indicated by the teachers (4)

affects your creativity. There are so many different worlds in books. I think you also develop your language skills. The way the reader speaks is different; they speak more correctly. Their words are likewise different; the perspective changes with reading. There you see different events; you see different lives and people. That is how you develop a different culture." (18). The distribution of the themes related to the interview questions in this study is shown in Figure 1.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, the aim was to reveal characteristics related to the reading habits of high-level readers. The daily reading times of the candidate teachers range between 30 min and 2.5 h. In research conducted by Yılmaz et al. (2009), the time that students devote to

reading books per day is none at all, less than 1 to 2 h, and 3 to 4 h, and it was stated that usually 1 to 2 h were spent reading books. In addition, regarding when to read, students preferred options such as when they have the opportunity, before going to bed, weekends, and holidays. In the present study, the preferred periods for reading are daytime, evening, before going to sleep, when emotions are intense, and no special time. The reading periods stated in these two studies are not similar. The reason for this could be that the present study completely left the preferences to the candidate teachers via the interview method, and the answers of the survey in Yılmaz et al. (2009) were determined by the researchers and students chose among the options presented. In addition, it is generally seen that quiet, noiseless, non-distracting environments are preferred as reading areas. The candidate teachers focused on the importance of sound, light, and area in the reading

Table 10. Themes and codes related to the formation of reading habits.

Theme	Code (f)
At the request of the person	With intrinsic motivation (4)
	By learning to be respectful to the book (1)
	By wanting to read with a light heart (3)
	By enjoying when reading a book (1)
	When one reads regularly (2)
	By gradually starting with shorter texts (1)
	By starting with books appropriate to a person's level (1)
	By being happy when one reads (1)
	When it helps one to express oneself (1)
	When discovered that one's vocabulary was getting richer (1)
	When one feels uncomfortable when one does not read a book (1)
Thanks to others	Thanks to beautiful books (1)
	Thanks to the teacher (1)
	Thank to the family (4)
	By having book reading sessions in class (1)
	Thanks to the teacher suggesting the right book (1)

environment.

The participants were divided into two groups: those who prefer essays and those who prefer novels. While there were very few participants reading newspapers, more read magazines. Many different genres were represented in the reading preferences of the participants. According to Deniz (2015), students are mostly interested in adventure novels, emotional novels, and storybooks. They were much less interested in poetry and essays with religious content. While half of the students were interested in scientific journals, one-fourth of them did not read any magazines. It is seen that 25% of secondary school students do not read newspapers, and those who read newspapers are interested in sports, politics, celebrities, puzzles, and culture/arts news. In the present study, the low interest in reading novels, newspapers, and magazines coincides with the research findings reported by Deniz (2015), but the preference for informative texts does not match. While most secondary school students in Deniz's (2015) research do not read informative texts, almost half of the participants in the present research read them. This may be because the participants in our study are older and more advanced readers. Similarly, Semerci (2002) determined that university students do not read periodicals. Very few of the participants in the present study read periodicals either. Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) stated that students read magazines, comics, the Internet, books for pleasure, and newspapers. This conclusion does not correspond to the findings of our study. This may also are informed of many situations through technological tools. In the present study, candidate teachers also mentioned why they preferred a certain genre when specifying the genres they liked. In fact, this comprises their purpose for

reading. Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) discerned a range of motivations prompting students to engage in reading, which encompassed reading for enjoyment, acquiring knowledge or educational purposes, seeking relaxation, alleviating boredom, experiencing excitement, forming attachments to literary characters, stimulating cognitive faculties, passing time, finding motivation, and seeking an avenue for escapism. These resemble the candidate teachers' reasons in the present study for choosing genres, such as feeling free of life's troubles while reading, finding the opportunity to think, relaxing, and obtaining information. It is seen that the participants paid attention to the writer, content, and structure of the book and their own psychological conditions, and also they tried to avoid popular writers. However, there are participants who stated that they have soured on a book they loved after it became popular. Therefore, it turned out that high-level readers made an informed choice by evaluating the quality of the book from all perspectives.

There are many works by domestic and foreign writers that the participants cannot forget, which have left a mark on their lives. The reasons for being influenced are the subject of the book, its style and messages, identification with the hero and the author, and its impressiveness. Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007) inquired with students regarding their preferred reading subjects, eliciting responses that encompassed topics such as celebrities, sports personalities, individuals or characters who shared common attributes, musicians, peers of a similar age who have accomplished noteworthy feats, animals, fantasy characters, contemporaries grappling with issues like substance abuse or criminality, individuals or characters markedly distinct from themselves, and historical figures. It is seen in the present study that themes such as

Table 11. Themes and codes related to the effects of reading habits.

Theme	Code (f)
Expression	His/her speech (diction) is smooth. (5)
	He/she can express himself/herself well. (2)
	He/she can speak properly and fluently. (1)
	Satisfies the need for being understood. (1)
	Allows one to explain oneself. (1)
	Affects understanding and explaining. (1)
	Allows one to transfer what has been learned. (1)
	Ensures language development. (2)
	Improves vocabulary. (1)
Self-efficacy	Affects the whole life. (2)
	Becomes a role model to his/her family. (1)
	Affects behaviors. (1)
	Has high self-confidence. (2)
	He/she attracts attention with his/her knowledge. (4)
	Affects setting goals. (1)
	Allows establishing a social environment. (2)
	Teaches manners. (1)
	Adds naivety. (1)
	Allows spending quality time. (1)
	Turns our rights to wrongs and our wrongs to rights. (1)
	Teaches that one should not forget the past or the future. (1)
	Teaches people to listen to each other. (2)
Thoughts	Offers a perspective that will evaluate time. (1)
	Allows acquiring different perspectives on life. (9)
	Allows expressing different opinions. (1)
	Teaches looking at things in a different way. (1)
	Improves imagination. (1)
	Enables thinking differently. (1)
	Affects the way intelligence works. (2)
	Ensures respect for differences (religion, language, race). (1)
	Develops a person's thoughts. (6)
	Enables creative thinking. (1)
	Teaches critical thinking. (1)
Emotions	People who have acquired the habit of reading cannot be happy since they question everything. (1)
	Becomes a partner in loneliness. (1)
	Allows one to be happy. (2)
	Gives the ability to express feelings. (1)

subject of the book, hero, and message contain similarities. Characters in books are one of the elements that impress readers most. In addition, personal features, structural features, content features, and extrinsic features affect the participants' reading skills.

The ages at which the participants begin to acquire reading habits vary between 8 and 18. Family members, relatives, teachers, and friends are influential in gaining reading habits. Sometimes it occurs as an internal process without anyone's influence. This has been instrumental for some participants to gain a reading habit,

such as competing with others, taking someone as an example, not finding anything else to do, having problems, experiencing difficulty in work life and understanding the need to improve themselves, and the recognition of what they have gained.

Anderson et al. (1988) state that parents and teachers should give high priority to improving the reading habits of their children and students. Yılmaz (2004) revealed that Turkish parents are utterly indifferent about their children's reading habits. Moreover, in the study by Deniz (2015), families have the greatest influence and the
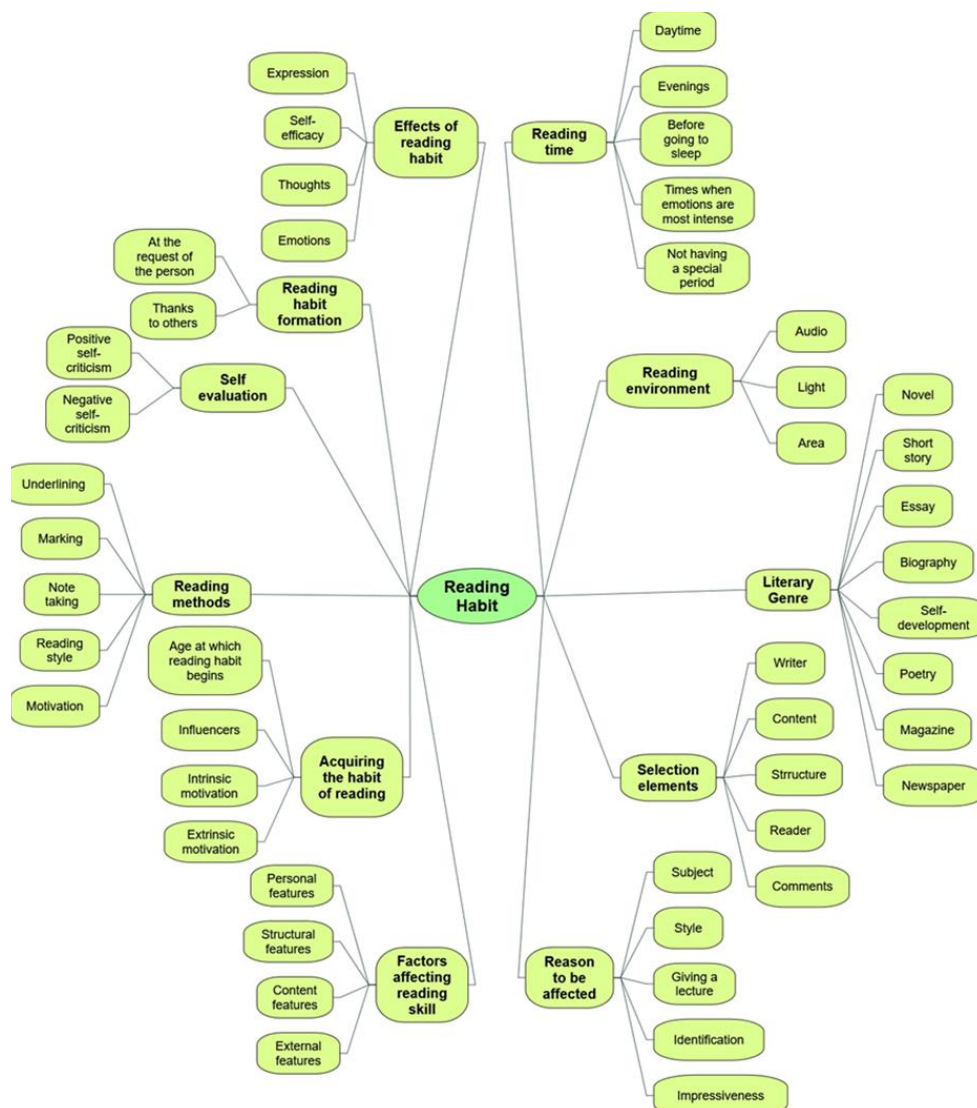
Figure 1. Themes and codes related to reading habits.

media the least influence on the reading habits of students. As outlined by Barone and Barone (2016), an educator extends an invitation to their students, encouraging them to embrace the role of authentic readers. Throughout this journey, the students are afforded the opportunity to articulate and delineate the precise parameters of what this designation entails. In the present study, the candidate teachers are most influenced by their teachers. This indicates that teachers play the main role in the development of a reading habit. This confirms the fact that most individuals should have a role model when it comes to reading. In our study, the participants who started reading due to role models began reading at an earlier age, while others began to gain internal motivation, and this process extended to the high school and university period. As posited by Anderson et al. (1985), the act of reading, akin to

mastering a musical instrument, is not an achievement reached definitively at a particular age. Instead, it is an acquired skill that advances progressively with persistent practice and engagement. Although the candidate teachers have acquired the reading habit at different ages, this indicates that it is acquired once at a certain age and it is sustained.

The participants used the following methods while reading: underlining; using appropriate emojis for content; using signs such as stars, exclamation marks, arrows, and quotes; using notes; writing opinions; using a dictionary; and reading the general outline of the book. Güneş (2009) also mentions that one can use methods such as underlining, circling, framing, using clues or making symbols, following text logic, making notes on different parts of the page, and making reading slips while following the in-depth reading. The present study

shows that our participants use in-depth reading methods when reading. As articulated by Grabe (1991), the progression of reading skills occurs incrementally; fluency in reading does not manifest abruptly or instantaneously, even after participating in a reading development program. Instead, the attainment of fluent reading is the outcome of sustained, protracted endeavor and step-by-step enhancement. The candidate teachers stated that they can use speed reading, but prefer to use it for event pieces rather than for think pieces.

The participants positively and negatively criticized themselves as readers. They described themselves as good, beautiful, loyal, objective, regular, and empathetic readers. Some participants emphasized that they could not stop reading and they felt something was missing when not reading. Yılmaz et al. (2009) found that university students had weak reading habits. Furthermore, it was seen that the students did not read regularly and in general they would purchase the books they would read. Students are often unable to read due to lack of time. In our study, since high-level readers were interviewed, in general, they were regular readers, they considered themselves good readers, and they even tried to correct any issues they had with their habits. It was discovered that readers felt sad if they went a day or two without reading. The participants usually buy the books they read and sometimes use the library.

According to the participants, the habit of reading is formed by choosing as a role model a teacher or someone from the family or surroundings and by selecting the right book for the person. According to Yılmaz's (2004) study, reading habits were not sufficiently developed in the class teacher candidates. The lack of a reading habit in the family, previous learning experiences, economic reasons, and the frequency of radio/TV/Internet use were given as reasons for the absence of this habit. Ogunrombi and Adio (1995) state that a lack of good reading skills prevents good reading habits among students. In accordance with the findings presented by Wigfield et al. (2004), educators are encouraged to actively foster intrinsic motivation for reading within the classroom environment. This cultivation of intrinsic motivation not only contributes to the development of reading skills but also holds the potential to engender sustained, long-term engagement with reading. Additionally, as demonstrated by Hughes-Hassell and Rodge (2007), a noteworthy correlation exists between individuals' leisure reading orientation and their academic achievement. Thus, it is imperative for educators to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of leisure reading habits among young learners. Ogunrombi and Adio (1995), in their research on libraries in schools, state that students' family histories contribute little to their reading habits since very few homes had libraries. Therefore, it is necessary that the house helps the school in the education of children. In our study, many participants stated the importance of the family and

having a library at home. According to the results reported by Strommen and Mates (2004), the family should invest in showing children the pleasure of reading aloud regularly, they should make accessible books suitable for the age and interest of the child as the child matures, they should provide a model for children to imitate, and the interest should be encouraged by scheduling family reading periods, by showing the social nature of reading, and via chats on the books the family members read. According to Anderson and Pearson (1984), being a good reader requires a rich curriculum with concepts from everyday life and areas of study learned. Being a good reader needs books that explain how and why everything works. Being a good reader depends on teachers who insist that students think about the connections between ideas when reading. According to the results of our and other studies, it can be argued that the teacher and family are the most important elements in the development of the child's reading habit.

According to the present research, a person's reading habit affects his/her understanding and storytelling style, perspective on life, relations with the social environment, mood, knowledge, and self-efficacy. Ogunrombi and Adio (1995) state that a lack of good reading skills prevents good reading habits among students. Having a reading habit in an individual affects his/her comprehension and expression, perspective on life, relationships with the social environment, emotion, and knowledge. The findings of the two studies are similar in this respect.

Barone and Barone (2016) assert that proficient readers typically engage in several behaviors, including reading for enjoyment, engaging in book-related discussions, demonstrating a propensity to complete the books they commence, forming connections with characters within the narrative, frequently opting for specific literary genres, dedicating extended time to reading activities, and consuming a substantial volume of boks. By exhibiting many of these features during the interview process, the participants once again showed that they were high-level readers.

Consequently, the reading environment and book selection are the points high-level readers pay attention to. On a daily basis, these individuals allocate dedicated time to reading books and employ their unique reading approaches during the reading process. Despite their impressive annual consumption of literature, ranging from 30 to 100 books, they still acknowledge areas in which they aspire to enhance their reading skills. The cultivation of their reading habits begins during their formative years, influenced either by a role model or a supportive figure within their social milieu. The internalization of this reading habit typically commences when individuals recognize an intrinsic urge to read; however, its full development typically occurs during later stages, notably during high school and university education.

This study underscores the preeminent role played by the immediate social environment, encompassing

parents, relatives, teachers, and friends, as the primary determinant influencing an individual's reading habits. Furthermore, given the diverse experiences, perspectives, and emotions pertaining to reading among the participants, it is apparent that their unique reading orientations, desires, expectations, and the process of uncovering personal meaning within the realm of reading collectively contribute to their status as high-level readers.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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