



L1 and L2 Summarizing Strategies Used by EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the frequency and effectiveness of summarization strategies used by 80 Turkish EFL learners in both their L1 and L2 processes. Participants completed a self-report questionnaire and a summary writing task in both languages. Results revealed moderate use and effectiveness of summarization strategies in both processes, with positive correlations found between the use of certain strategies and summary criteria. These findings highlight the importance of teaching a variety of strategies to improve summarization performance in both L1 and L2 processes. The transferability of L1 summarization skills to L2 is also emphasized.

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Statement of Publication Ethics

The ethics committee approval has been obtained for the current study: Pamukkale University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee, 25/05/2022, 178.233.40.155

Authors' Contribution Rate

Both authors contributed equally.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest for the current study.

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Introduction

Summarizing techniques refer to methods used to condense and simplify large amounts of information into a more manageable form. In the context of second/foreign language (L2) [L2 is used to refer to English as a foreign language in the rest of the article.] and first language (L1) learning, summarizing is a crucial skill that helps students effectively understand and retain information. There are various summarizing techniques that can be used, including extracting main ideas, condensing text, rephrasing, and creating visual aids such as mind maps or concept maps. These techniques help learners identify key concepts, make connections, and improve their critical thinking and comprehension skills.

One of the essential summarizing models, the summarizing strategy model, proposed by Dijk and Kintsch (1983). The model is based on the assumption that summarizing is a complex process that involves multiple cognitive operations, such as text comprehension, information extraction, and information integration. According to Dijk and Kintsch (1983), the process of summarizing begins with the comprehension of the text, where the reader extracts the information contained in the text and organizes it into a mental representation. Then, the reader applies a set of large-scale building rules to condense the information and extract the most important ideas and details.

The macrostructure building rules proposed by Dijk and Kintsch (1983) are a set of heuristics that guide the summarization process by directing the reader to select certain information over others. These rules are based on the idea that the most important information in a text is the information that is central to the text's coherence and the information that is repeated across multiple sentences. The summarizing strategy model has been widely used in the field of natural language processing. However, the model has also received criticism for oversimplifying the process of summarizing and not taking into account the influence of individual differences and text-specific factors on the summarization process.

Studies exploring the use of summarization strategies in Turkish contexts have revealed a number of challenges faced by students when summarizing various text types. For instance, Erdem (2012) analyzed the summarization preferences and practices of teacher trainees in Turkish language and literature through a linguistic summarization study. The results showed that the trainees had difficulty in choosing appropriate summarization strategies and often relied on simple deletion of information. Eyüp, Stebler, and Yurt (2012) investigated the tendencies of Turkish language teacher trainees in using summarization strategies. The results indicated that the trainees had limited knowledge of summarization strategies and lacked the skills to apply them effectively.

Sulak and Arslan (2017) evaluated the utilization of summarization strategies among fourth-grade primary school students. The findings showed that the students had limited knowledge of summarization strategies and often lacked the ability to apply them accurately and effectively. Özçakmak (2014) looked into the difficulties experienced by teacher trainees in Turkish language when summarizing listened material. The results

revealed that the trainees struggled with comprehension, accuracy, and reduction in summarizing listened material.

These studies shed light on the practices and preferences of summarization strategies among Turkish language teacher trainees and primary school students. The findings indicate that both groups struggle to summarize texts, but can benefit from targeted training on summarization strategies. Thus, it is imperative to integrate summarization training into the education of Turkish language and teacher training.

In a recent contribution to the field of summarization research in L1, Çetinkaya, Şentürk, and Dikici (2020) provide a thorough examination of the relationship between the use of summarization strategies and summarization performance of the high school students and juniors, and the study offers practical implications for education. The steps involved in the process, including comprehending the source text, constructing a preliminary summary, and revising and correcting the draft summary through the use of appropriate strategies, have a positive impact on the overall quality of the final summary. The authors found that there is a positive relationship between the use of summarization strategies and summarization performance. Furthermore, the revision and correction stage demonstrated the greatest contribution to the formation of the final summary, emphasizing the significance of a thorough review process in the creation of a competent summary. These findings are important as they highlight the importance of teaching summarization strategies to students to improve their summarization performance.

On the other hand, a literature review of studies on the extent to which EFL speakers use summarizing strategies showed mixed results. Some studies found that EFL learners employed summarizing strategies effectively, while others revealed that they struggled with these techniques. For example, Ajideh, Zohrabi and Nouazad, (2013) found that Iranian EFL speakers had a high level of proficiency in summarizing strategies, particularly when the text was related to their field of expertise. The study also discovered that students who had been exposed to summarizing strategies in their L1 performed better in summarizing English texts compared to those who had not. Similarly, Kato (2018) realized that the L1 information and abilities EFL learners already possess is crucial in order to study the transfer of L1 summarizing skills to L2 summary performance. The author (2018) explores the transfer relationship of summarizing skills between the first language (L1) and second language (L2) of Japanese university students using a pre-test/post-test design to compare the summarizing performance of students in both languages. She attempted to determine if Japanese EFL learners are affected by their summarizing abilities in their first language, Japanese, while doing summaries in a second language, English. The correlation analysis revealed that a little variation in L1's summarizing ability had an impact on L2's total summary performances.

Malaj (2020) investigated the summarizing strategies on the production of literary text summary in L2. The results indicated that students with a higher level of vocabulary knowledge and proficiency employed more effective summarizing strategies compared to those with a lower level of vocabulary knowledge.

However, some studies showed that Turkish EFL learners had difficulties with summarizing strategies, particularly when the text was complex and unfamiliar. For

example, a study by Deneme and Demirel (2012) found that Turkish EFL speakers had limited proficiency in summarizing academic texts, due to the difficulties they encountered in comprehending the text and identifying the main ideas. Yet the explicit teaching of summary writing contributed to Turkish EFL learners' overall writing skill. The results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in their writing skills, particularly in terms of coherence, organization, and accuracy. The authors suggest that teaching summary writing can be an effective method for developing writing skills in a foreign language. They recommend that teachers incorporate summary writing activities in their instruction to enhance their students' writing abilities.

The significance of the use of summarizing strategies is widely acknowledged in the literature, as it is considered to be a crucial component of effective comprehension practices in language teaching and learning. It is suggested that the extent to which Turkish EFL speakers use summarizing strategies is influenced by various factors, including their vocabulary knowledge, familiarity with the text, and prior exposure to summarizing strategies. The studies indicate that it is important to include summarization training as part of language and teacher training education. Further research is needed to explore the strategies that Turkish EFL speakers utilize in summarizing and to identify ways to enhance their summarizing skills in their L1 and L2.

To this end, the study aims to examine the correlation between the frequency of Turkish students' use of summarization strategies in their first language (L1) and foreign language (L2) and their summarization performance in those languages, particularly English. It recognizes the significance of summarization strategies in the students' competence during the process of comprehending and succinctly conveying information. The study also recognizes the importance of genre elements, such as introduction, main plot, conclusion, and outline in the mastery of summarization strategies. The research questions addressed by the study are as follows:

1. What is the frequency of using summarizing strategies in L1 and L2 processes for the participants?
2. How are the summarization performances of the participants in the L1 and L2 processes?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the participants' performance in summarizing the L1 process and the frequency of their use of summarization strategies?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the participants' performance in summarizing the L2 process and the frequency of their use of summarization strategies?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the frequency of participants' use of summarization strategies in the L1 and L2 processes?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the participants' success in summarizing the L1 and L2 processes?

Methodology

Research Design and Publication Ethics

Prior to the data collection, the Ethics Committee of the Institute of Social Sciences was applied at the context of the study, and the necessary permissions were acquired from the School of Foreign Languages (Pamukkale University Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee, 25/05/2022, 178.233.40.155).

The Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the use of summarizing strategies and summarizing performance in both the first language, Turkish (L1) and foreign language, English (L2). A mixed-methods research design was employed, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The research was conducted over a four-week period, during which time participants were asked to write summaries in both L1 and L2. These summaries constituted the qualitative data for the study. Subsequently, participants were administered a questionnaire developed by Çetinkaya et al. (2020) to collect quantitative data.

Sample

The study sample was drawn from a preessional language school at a public university in Turkey. Eighty students from diverse majors who had been studying English for almost a year at the language school were recruited through convenience sampling, which allows for the acquisition of relevant data in a short time. The students were considered to be at a B1-B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and their proficiency was determined through proficiency tests administered by the language school. The sample consisted of 80 students, with 58,2% being female and 42,9% being male, with an age range of 17 to 23 years.

Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data. First, two anonymous fable stories, one in English and one in Turkish, were selected. Both stories possessed the characteristic features of the genre, such as characters, plot, setting, and tension. The Turkish story was titled "Zümrüdüanka Kuşunun Hikayesi" [The Story of Simorgh], and the English story was titled "A Faithful Dog." The fable genre was particularly chosen because fables are concise and comprehensible stories that can be easily read and understood in a short time. Furthermore, participants were familiar with the genre as fables are a component of culture and often used as a tool to teach moral lessons (Sutherland and Arbuthnot, 1977; Adams & Bruce, 1982). According to Applebee (1978), tales such as fables have served as a means of socialization, through which children and youngsters learn cultural norms and principles. The readability and intelligibility of the English story were relevant to B2-C1 CEFR level students, as measured by the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (5,8) and Flesch

Reading Ease (80,5). The Turkish story was assumed to be easily comprehensible for native speakers of Turkish.

The second instrument was the summarization strategies questionnaire developed by Çetinkaya et al. (2020), which consisted of 56 items and was used to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire was divided into three sub-sections: 1) strategies used in the reading-comprehension process of the text (22 items, Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .86); 2) strategies used in drafting the summary text (20 items, reliability coefficient of .87); and 3) strategies used in the text review and correction process (14 items, reliability coefficient of .92). The reliability coefficient for the entire instrument was .95.

The final research instrument was a rubric developed by Bahçivan and Çetinkaya (2021) used to evaluate the participants' summary outputs. The rubric consisted of five-level evaluation criteria, including introduction, main events, conclusion, and writing quality dimensions.

Procedure

The participants were asked to read two short fable stories and write a summary of each story in succession. The first story provided was in Turkish and the participants were asked to write a summary of the story in 15 minutes and then they were given the questionnaire to explore the summarization strategies they used in their L1. The same procedure was then repeated for the English short story. The responses on the questionnaire were used to compare the frequencies of summarization strategies used in L1 and L2. Finally, the summary outputs were evaluated by two expert instructors, one specializing in English and the other in Turkish. The results of these evaluations were considered as a measure of the participants' competence and were collected as qualitative data for the study.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was carried out using the SPSS 21 statistical package program to determine the frequency of students' use of summarization strategies and their level of success in summarization. Descriptive statistics were computed to determine whether there were significant correlations between students' summarization success and the frequency of their use of summarization strategies, using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

There are mainly two overarching research goals of this study. The first one is related to the relationship between the frequency of summarization strategies used by Turkish students in their L1 and L2 and their summarization performance in these languages. To address the first overarching research question concerning the correlation between the use of summarization strategies and summarization performance in L1 and L2, we conducted separate analyses of each construct - strategy use and success - in both

languages. As such, the first four research questions in the findings section are dedicated to answering this primary question.

The second overarching research question aims to determine whether there are significant differences in summary writing success between the two languages. Research questions five and six seek to provide answers to this question.

Findings

The frequency of using summarizing strategies in L1 and L2 processes for the participants

Table 1. Frequency of using summarizing strategies in L1 and L2 processes for students

		\bar{x}	Frequency	SD	Minimum Value	Maximum Value
Reading-Comprehension	Turkish	1,57	Sometimes	0,51	0,50	2,95
	English	1,55	Sometimes	0,47	0,55	2,68
Summary Draft Creation	Turkish	1,57	Sometimes	0,49	0,50	2,90
	English	1,57	Sometimes	0,51	0,40	2,60
Revision and Correction of Summary Draft	Turkish	1,83	Sometimes	0,71	0,00	3,00
	English	1,79	Sometimes	0,74	0,00	3,00
Strategy	Turkish	1,66	Sometimes	0,50	0,35	2,73
	English	1,64	Sometimes	0,51	0,35	2,69

The average score for Turkish summarization strategies used in the text reading-comprehension process by students is $\bar{x}=1,57$, while the average score for English summarization strategies is $\bar{x}=1,55$. The average score for both Turkish and English summarization strategies used in creating draft summary texts is $\bar{x}=1,57$. The average score for Turkish summarization strategies used in revising and correcting draft summary texts is $\bar{x}=1,83$, whereas the average score for English summarization strategies is $\bar{x}=1,79$. When the summarization strategies of the students are examined, it is seen that the highest average belongs to the strategies used in the draft summary review and correction process. The mean score for Turkish summarization strategy points is $\bar{x} =1,66$, while the mean score for English summarization strategy points is $\bar{x}=1,64$. When considering the average scores, it is found that the frequency of both Turkish and English summarization strategies is "sometimes."

The summarization performances of the participants in the L1 and L2 processes

Table 2. Summarizing success levels of students in L1 and L2 processes

		\bar{x}	Level	SD	Minimum Value	Maximum Value
Introduction	Turkish	2,14	Moderate	1,50	0,00	4,00
	English	1,90	Moderate	1,38	0,00	4,00
Main Events	Turkish	1,79	Moderate	1,40	0,00	4,00
	English	1,83	Moderate	1,51	0,00	4,00
Conclusion	Turkish	2,25	Moderate	1,29	0,00	4,00
	English	1,80	Moderate	1,32	0,00	4,00
Outline and Mechanics	Turkish	2,01	Moderate	1,17	0,00	4,00

	English	1,74	Moderate	1,03	0,00	4,00
Summary	Turkish	8,19	Moderate	4,98	0,00	16,00
	English	7,28	Moderate	4,78	0,00	16,00

The average Turkish summary scores of the students for the introduction criterion is $\bar{x}=2,14$, for the main events criterion $\bar{x}=1,79$, for the conclusion criterion $\bar{x}=2,25$, for the outline and mechanics criterion $\bar{x}=2,01$, and for the story summary $\bar{x}=8,19$. Similarly, the average English summary scores for the introduction criterion is $\bar{x}=1,90$, for the main events criterion $\bar{x}=1,83$, for the conclusion criterion $\bar{x}=1,80$, for the outline and mechanics criterion $\bar{x}=1,74$, and for the story summary $\bar{x}=7,28$. Upon examining the average scores, it can be observed that the students' overall summarization performance in both Turkish and English is at the "moderate" level.

Relationship between the participants' performance in summarizing the L1 process and the frequency of their use of summarization strategies

Table 3. Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficients between the success of students in summarizing the L1 process and the frequency of using summarization strategies

	Introduction	Main events	Conclusion	Outline and Mechanics	Summary
Reading-Comprehension	-,074	-,003	-,093	-,048	-,061
Summary Draft Creation	,006	,034	,012	,018	,021
Revision and Correction of Summary Draft	-,043	,006	-,086	-,038	-,038
Strategy	-,043	,013	-,068	-,028	-,032

It was determined that there was no significant relationship between the frequency of students' use of L1 process summarization strategies and their summation success ($p>0.05$).

Relationship between the participants' performance in summarizing the L2 process and the frequency of their use of summarization strategies

Table 4. Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficients between the success of students in summarizing the L2 process and the frequency of using summarization strategies

	Introduction	Main events	Conclusion	Outline and Mechanics	Summary
Reading-Comprehension	,022	,086	,175	,180	,124
Summary Draft Creation	,044	,067	,112	,124	,094
Revision and Correction of Summary Draft	,081	,055	,088	,071	,079
Strategy	,060	,075	,133	,130	,107

It was determined that there was no significant relationship between the frequency of students' use of L2 process summarization strategies and their summation success ($p>0.05$).

Relationship between the frequency of participants' use of summarization strategies in the L1 and L2 processes

Table 5. Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficients between the frequency of students' use of L1 and L2 process summarization strategies

		English			
		Reading- Comprehension	Summary Draft Creation	Revision and Correction of Summary Draft	Total
Turkish	Reading-Comprehension	,760**	,622**	,527**	,690**
	Summary Draft Creation	,517**	,781**	,606**	,705**
	Revision and Correction of Summary Draft	,517**	,623**	,816**	,753**
	Total	,668**	,758**	,760**	,818**

**p<0.01

High-level positive correlations were found between the frequencies of using text-reading comprehension strategies in L1 and L2 processes. The relationships were significant ($p<0.01$). Similarly, there is a high level of positive correlation between the frequency of using summary draft creation strategies in L1 and the frequency of using both summary draft creation and summarization strategies in L2. The relationships were found to be significant at a high level ($p<0.01$). In L1, a high level of positive correlation was observed between the frequency of using summary draft review and correction strategies and the frequency of using summary draft review and correction, as well as summarization strategies in L2. The relationships were moderately significant ($p<0.01$). Additionally, positive and highly significant relationships were found between the frequencies of using summarization strategies in L1 and the frequency of creating a summary draft, revising and correcting the summary draft, and using summarization strategies in L2. There were also moderate and positive correlations between the frequencies of using text-reading comprehension strategies, which were significant ($p<0.01$).

Relationship between the participants' success in summarizing the L1 and L2 processes

Table 6. Pearson Moments Correlation Coefficients between students' success in summarizing L1 and L2 processes

		English				
		Introduction	Main Events	Conclusion	Outline and Mechanics	Total
Turkish	Introduction	,623**	,610**	,540**	,541**	,638**
	Main Events	,570**	,653**	,464**	,532**	,615**
	Conclusion	,547**	,623**	,463**	,519**	,591**
	Outline and Mechanics	,515**	,573**	,493**	,579**	,588**
	Total	,611**	,660**	,527**	,584**	,654**

It has been determined that there exist positive and moderately significant correlations between the scores of introduction, main events, conclusion, outline, and summary in the L1 process and those in the L2 process ($p < 0.01$).

Discussion

In an effort to explore the correlation between first language (L1) and second language (L2) summarization strategies of Turkish students, the study looks at the relationship between their usage of summary techniques in their L2 and L1 and how well they do while summarizing in those languages.

The study found that on average, participants used summarization strategies "sometimes" in both Turkish and English language processes for text-reading comprehension and creating summary drafts. However, they used summarization strategies more frequently in revising and correcting summary drafts, with an average score of "sometimes" for both languages. The participants' overall summarization performance in both Turkish and English was at a "moderate" level. The mean scores for all criteria (introduction, main events, conclusion, outline and mechanics, and story summary) were within the range of "moderate" performance level.

There was no significant relationship between the frequency of students' use of L1 process summarization strategies and their summation success. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between the frequency of students' use of L2 process summarization strategies and their summation success.

High-level positive correlations were found between the frequencies of using text-reading comprehension strategies, summary draft writing strategies, and summary draft review and correction strategies in L1 and L2 processes. Also, positive and highly significant relationships were found between the frequencies of using summarization strategies in L1 and the frequency of creating a summary draft, revising and correcting the summary draft, and using summarization strategies in L2. Similarly, there exist positive and moderately significant correlations between the scores of introduction, main events, conclusion, outline, and summary in the L1 process and those in the L2 process.

Overall, the study suggests that participants used summarization strategies moderately and achieved moderate levels of success in summarization in both languages. There was no significant relationship found between the frequency of students' use of summarization strategies and their summation success in either L1 or L2 processes. However, positive and significant correlations were found between the frequency of using different types of summarization strategies in L1 and L2 processes, as well as between the scores of different summarization criteria in L1 and L2 processes.

Kato (2018) highlights the importance of building strong summarizing skills in L1 as a foundation for developing these skills in L2. The author recommends that language teachers provide explicit instruction and practice in summarizing strategies in both languages to enhance transferability. However, interestingly, it cannot be argued that success in L1 does not necessarily lead to success in L2 according to the results of this study. While building strong summarizing skills in L1 is important for developing these skills in L2, the success in L1 does not necessarily lead to success in L2. The study showed

that participants used different summarization strategies in both languages, indicating that transferability of skills may not always occur as expected. Therefore, explicit instruction and practice in summarizing strategies in both languages are recommended to enhance transferability.

Studies in the literature indicate that the number and quality of activities aimed at summarizing in the teaching tools used in the education process are insufficient. Teachers do not give enough activities related to summarization strategies, and the summarization skills of middle school students are weak (Karadağ, 2019; Kuşdemir & Düşünsel, 2018; Ülper & Arıca Akkök, 2010; Ülper & Yazıcı Okuyan, 2010). This situation hinders the development of skills and strategies related to summarization in L1 in the early period. Based on the relationship between L1 and L2 process, it can be said that the qualified education to be given in L1 process will also positively affect the L2 summarization skill.

Additionally, the use of summarization strategies and summarization success can vary based on factors such as language, task difficulty, and prior knowledge (Millis & King, 2001; Ozuru et al., 2009). These factors can impact the effectiveness of summarization strategies, which may contribute to the moderate success levels found in this study.

The lack of a significant relationship between the frequency of strategy use and summarization success aligns with previous research that has found mixed results (Crossley & McNamara, 2007; Keck 2014; Ozuru et al., 2009; Tighe & Schatschneider 2016). This suggests that strategy use alone may not be enough to ensure success in summarization tasks, and other factors may also be at play. For example, Crossley and McNamara (2007) found that while strategy use was positively related to summarization quality, it did not account for all of the variance. Keck (2014) also found that the frequency of strategy use was not a significant predictor of summarization success. Similarly, Ozuru et al. (2009) and Tighe and Schatschneider (2016) found that strategy use was not the only factor that contributed to successful summarization. Therefore, it can be concluded that while the use of summarization strategies is important, other factors such as background knowledge, motivation, working memory capacity, and reading comprehension skills may also play a role in summarization success.

However, the significant correlations found between the frequency of using different types of summarization strategies and the scores of different summarization criteria in both languages support the idea that strategy selection may be more important than strategy frequency (Çetinkaya et.al., 2020; Porter-O'Donnell, 2004). This emphasizes the need for educators to teach a variety of summarization strategies to students and encourage them to select and apply the appropriate strategy for a given task. The findings of this study align with previous research on summarization strategies and success, highlighting the complexity of this process and the importance of selecting appropriate strategies for a given task.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the frequency and effectiveness of summarization strategies used by students in both their L1 and L2 processes. The findings revealed that students used summarization strategies "sometimes" in both processes, with the highest frequency of use observed in revising and correcting summary draft texts. Despite the moderate level of overall summarization performance in both L1 and L2, no significant relationship was found between the frequency of summarization strategy use and students' summarization success. However, high-level positive correlations were observed between the frequencies of using text-reading comprehension, summary draft creation, and summarization strategies in both L1 and L2 processes. Furthermore, positive and moderately significant correlations were found between the scores of introduction, main events, conclusion, outline, and summary in the L1 and L2 processes. These results highlight the importance of using various summarization strategies and their effectiveness in improving summarization performance in both L1 and L2 processes. Further research can investigate the effectiveness of different types of summarization strategies and their impact on language learners' summarization skills.

Implications of the study's findings emphasize the need for educators to teach and encourage the use of a variety of summarization strategies in both L1 and L2 processes, with particular emphasis on strategies that focus on text-reading comprehension, summary draft writing, and overall summarization. Moreover, educators need to pay attention to the specific summarization criteria of introduction, main events, conclusion, outline, and summary, and guide students to improve their skills in these areas.

One limitation of this study is the use of self-report data to measure the frequency of summarization strategy use, which may not accurately reflect students' actual use of these strategies. Additionally, the study only focused on university-level language learners, so the findings may not generalize to other age groups or proficiency levels.

Further research can expand on this study by investigating the effectiveness of different types of summarization strategies on L1 and L2 learners' summarization skills. Future studies can also explore the impact of other factors such as task difficulty, prior knowledge, and motivation on summarization performance. Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate whether the effectiveness of summarization strategies varies depending on the type of text or genre being summarized.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the frequency and effectiveness of summarization strategies in both L1 and L2 processes and highlights the importance of teaching a variety of strategies to improve summarization performance.

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