Survey of Poetry Reading Strategy as the Modern Tool to Identify Poetry Reading Strategies

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Abstract
This study examines common strategies that English as a Foreign language (EFL) students employ when reading English poetry. To identify the strategies, a survey was designed for data collection from TESL students. The result shows that students significantly tend to use the strategies that require their creativity to construct new ideas in the meaning making of poetry. Therefore, global strategies are the strategy that they use more than problem solving followed by support strategies. This study is an important issue to consider since reading strategies assist readers to recognize that the reading strategies help them understand poetry more effectively. As a result, it is meaningful to explore reading strategies that are used in reading poetry.
Keywords: SPRS, Survey Of Poetry Reading Strategy, Poetry, Reading strategy, EFL poetry readers, English as a foreign language students.

1. Introduction

In today's post-modern era, educationists emphasize on improving strategies in reading (Zare and Mobarakeh 2011). It occurred because recent research made the attitude change from focus on the reading product or reading comprehension scores (Zare 2013), to reading process or identifying reading strategies (Larijani et al 2015).

There is no clear-cut definition or categorization for poetry as is elaborated by Thorne (2009, p. 351). Although, the main function of poetry is entertainment, a poet can "implicitly or explicitly convey a message" about an important issue by creating his unique varied manipulated language (2008, p. 371), that is why reading and understanding poetry can be "difficult for the readers" (p. 351).

In this regard, poetry is the subject of interest more than any other genres and elicits attentions from students and teachers as it is very different with other texts and therefore it is important to know how it helps in language learning and teaching; and how poetry can be taught more effectively in language classes (Ebrahimi, 2016). This study tries to examine the significant role of poetry and propose an effective way of poetry teaching and reading by identifying the strategies that readers use in reading since reading strategies are an inevitable part among reading tasks (Zare and Mobarakeh 2011).

This research investigated the strategies employed by English as a Foreign language students in reading English poetries since learners employ these strategies to decide how to read more effectively (Poole 2010). As Table 1 shows below, there is a gap in poetry reading studies in the literature. The table reveals that there are many studies on reading strategies on other genres but very scarce studies have been done on poetry reading strategies.

Table 1. Research gap

Poetry reading strategies	Other text reading strategies
?	Hosenfeld (1977): EFL, general text
?	Block (1986): ESL, general text
?	Mokhtari and Reichard (2004): EFL/ESL, general text
?	Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008): EFL/ESL, general text

Therefore, although much has been written on teaching poetry problems (Benton 2000), this is one of the first studies that aims to recognize the poetry reading strategies. The significance of the current research is that there is not much research on reading strategies of poetry (Ebrahimi 2011). Hence, the literature that the researcher reviewed, did not deal directly with reading strategies of poetry. On the other hand, research normally attempts to study interpreting the poetry meaning rather than the strategies. The reason can be the difficulty of reading literature and poetic texts in comparison to non-literary texts (Ebrahimi and Zainal 2015).

The literature classes are mainly teacher-directed and meaning-driven; as a result, the students have the following assumptions about poetry: 1) a piece of poem has one correct interpretation; 2) the teacher possesses the correct interpretation; and 3) any differences between their interpretation and the teacher's are a result of a lack of understanding (Ebrahimi 2011).

Besides, teachers face some challenges to teach poetry. The reason is either because they do not know how to teach it effectively, or because they also think it is difficult. This occurs normally because they do not

have enough knowledge about the strategies that the students use, as a result, they cannot choose a useful strategy to teach poetry in a way that is more understandable for the poetry readers. As a result, not much knowledge of strategy use in reading poetry is reported by teachers or students but having this knowledge is essential to them for a more effective reading (Zare and Othman 2013). However as research (Tavakoli 2014; Ebrahimi 2012a) suggests, explicit teaching of reading strategies is a great step to have a more comprehensive reading (Alhaqbani and Riazi 2012).

The dominant model of poetry teaching is to teach through print focusing on finding a meaning. However, poets believe that the poem has to be read aloud to understand the deep meanings (Huges 2006). To understand poetry more deeply, teachers have to involve students with poetry. In other words, either the students do not know the strategies to be engaged in reading poetry or they do not know how to be engaged with it (Zare 2013). In this study, the researcher sought good strategies that learners employ in understanding a poem to recommend them to all teachers to apply them in their classes.

Most of the time, readers do not know which strategies they have to apply when they read poetry. It is clear that by applying the strategies to poetry students can understand the texts easily (Ebrahimi 2012b). Some students are not even aware of the importance of reading strategies or they do not know how to use them (Baker 2008; Blackowicz and Ogle 2008). The role of strategies is inevitable in learning (Block and Israel 2004; Phakiti 2003; Brantmeier 2000, 2002) because they are helpful in language learning improvement (Mokhtari, Reichard, and Sheorey 2008; Sheorey and Mokhtari 2001; Zhang 2001; Alexander and Jetton 2000). Therefore, this research is to explore strategies in reading poetry.

2. Review of Literature

According to Carrell et al. (1998: 97), "reading strategies are of interest not only for what they reveal about the ways readers manage interactions with written text but also for how the use of strategies is related to effective reading comprehension." Moreover, RAND Reading Study group, RRSG, (2002: 32) emphasizes on reading strategy instruction "because meaning does not exist in text, but rather must be actively constructed, instruction in how to employ strategies is necessary to improve comprehension."

The definition of reading strategy for this study follows Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) descriptions in which reading strategies include 1) "intentional, carefully planned techniques by which readers monitor or manage their reading," 2) "actions and procedures that the readers use while working directly with a text," and 3) "basic support mechanisms intended to aid the readers in comprehending the text." A number of different reading strategy schemes are listed in the table below:

Table 2. Comparison of different reading strategy schemes

Block (1986)	Carrell et al (1998)	Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002)	This study (SPRS)
GENERAL STRATEGIES: 1. anticipating content 2. recognizing text structure 3. integrating information 4. questioning information in the text 5. interpreting the text 6. using general knowledge and associations 7. commenting or behavior or processing 8. monitoring comprehension 9. correcting behavior 10. reacting to the text LOCAL STRATEGIES: 11. paraphrasing 12. rereading 13. questioning meaning of a clause or sentence 14. questioning meaning of a word 15. solving vocabulary problem	1. skimming 2. scanning 3. rereading 4. contextual guessing 5. skipping unknown words 6. tolerating ambiguity 7. making predictions 8. confirming or disconfirming inferences 9. using cognates 10. activating background knowledge or schemata 11. recognizing text structure	GLOBAL STRATEGIES: 1. setting purpose for reading 2. using prior knowledge 3. previewing text before reading 4. checking if content fits purpose 5. noting text characteristics organization 6. determining what to read closely 7. using text features 8. using context clues 9. using typographical aids 10. analyzing and evaluating 11. checking understanding 12. predicting or guessing text meaning 13. confirming predictions PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES: 14. reading slowly and carefully 15. trying to stay focused 16. adjusting reading rate 17. paying close attention 18. pausing and thinking 19. visualizing information 20. rereading 21. guessing meaning of unknown words SUPPORT STRATEGIES: 22. note taking 23. reading aloud 24. underlining 25. using reference materials 26. paraphrasing 27. finding relationship among text ideas 28. asking oneself questions 29. translating from English to L1 30. thinking in both languages	GLOBAL STRATEGIES: 1. setting purpose for poetry reading 2. using background knowledge 3. previewing poetry before reading 4. checking if content fits purpose 5. noting poetry characteristics organization 6. determining what to read closely 7. using text features 8. using context clues 9. analyzing and evaluating 10. checking understanding 11. predicting or guessing poetry meaning 12. getting information 13. making judgement and opinion PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES: 14. reading slowly and carefully 15. trying to be focused 16. adjusting reading rate 17. paying close attention 18. pausing and thinking 19. visualizing information 20. rereading 21. guessing meaning of unknown words 22. getting emotionally engaged SUPPORT STRATEGIES: 23. note taking 24. reading aloud 25. underlining 26. paraphrasing 27. finding relationship among poetry ideas 28. asking oneself questions 29. translating from English to L1 30. thinking in both languages

Moreover, there are different divisions in categorizing reading strategies as is shown in Table 2 below. Although these divisions use different terminologies, all of them have similar implications and that is their underlying framework which is the preliminary models of "top-down" and "bottom-up" reading processing.

Table 3. Categories of reading strategies

Hosenfeld (1977)	Barnard (1980)	Block (1986)	Barnett (1988)	Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002)	This study (SPRS)
main meaning line	global	general comprehension	text-level	global	global
word-solving	local	local linguistic	word-level	problem solving	problem solving
				support	support

This study follows Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) SORS which uses another classification scheme to classify the reading strategies. SORS as the quantitative instrument of this study classifies the reading strategies to three different types of strategies: Global, Problem-solving, and Support strategies.

A review of literature shows many studies on the use of reading strategies. Researchers wish to understand reading strategy use of readers (Sheorey and Mokhtari 2008; Mokhtari and Reichard 2004). Research also show that readers use a variety of reading strategies (Sheorey and Mokhtari 2008; Mokhtari and Reichard 2004).

Participants in Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) completed the earlier version of Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) inventory (2001) including 28 items about perceived academic reading strategy use and metacognitive awareness. Readers reported similar frequency of the use of Global and Problem Solving strategies; but the use of Support strategies was significantly different.

Mokhtari and Reichard (2004) had 141 native English college students in the US and 209 non-native English learning college students in Morocco. All of them were proficient readers in English. The Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) was used to have a comparison between the two groups. It showed that both groups had a moderate to high level of strategy use while reading in English. Moreover, the Moroccan students' mean scores of the total, Global strategies, Problem Solving strategies, and Support strategies on the MARSI were higher than the US students' mean scores. Its finding show that Moroccan students seek to be involved in reading strategies more frequently than the native English speakers in reading in English.

Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) conclude that readers of high level of proficiency are more aware of the strategies and they develop their reading strategies frequently; however, readers of low level of proficiency do not use different reading strategies and are not aware how to employ them appropriately.

Block (1992) also had the same conclusion. His finding was that the struggling students can identify problems, but they are not able to solve the problems because of the unfamiliarity of what to do with problems. Mohamed, Chew, and Kabilan (2006) come to the similar conclusion that successful readers are able to identify useful strategies, but less-successful readers struggle in using effective strategies (Hudson 2007; Riches and Genesee 2006; Jimenez 2000).

There are other studies such as Zhang (2001) supporting that better readers employ more reading strategies than poor ones. This is a similar result to Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008). Zhang's (2001) study on college students show that advanced readers use different reading strategies more often than less advanced readers. His findings also showed different characteristics of reading strategies among the two groups. As mentioned earlier, readers with higher level of proficiency tend to employ global or top-down strategies; on the other hand, readers with lower level of proficiency use the local or bottom-up strategies.

In other words, the analysis of different studies that examined the effects of strategies revealed the effectiveness of the explicit and systematic instruction for learners' reading comprehension (Boulware-Gooden et al 2007; Cummins, Stewart, and Block 2005). The students who learn the strategies, know how, when, and where to use and how to evaluate them. Learners who plan by pre-reading, monitor during reading, and evaluate the post-reading demonstrate better comprehension. Also, studies show that non-native English readers use more strategies than native English speakers (Mokhtari and Reichard 2004). Successful non-native readers use strategies including top-down strategies, but poor non-native readers are either less aware or use less reading strategies and relay more on bottom-up strategies (Zhang 2001). Needless to mention that the area of strategy use in poetry reading needs to be more explored. Accordingly, this study is adopting a quantitative method by introducing SPRS.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this research is to examine the reading strategy use of English as a Foreign language readers. For doing this research Iranian postgraduate students were chosen randomly since they are samples among EFL readers. All of the participants had a good command of English as they have been English literature postgraduate students and have been studied English literature for at least seven years. Additionally, they all got band 6 out of 9 in IELTS test as a requirement to pursue their studies in a foreign country. All of the participants were Iranian

postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in the last few years (2014 - 2016). For the purpose of this study, the EFL students' reading strategy use is identified through the use of a questionnaire. This research applies statistical analyses by a descriptive quantitative method to examine the collected data by this instrument. This study is a quantitative type as the adjusted version of SORS that is called Survey of Poetry Reading Strategies (SPRS) is used to find the strategies from 35 university students. This quantitative data collection leads the participants to check how much they use each strategy and also helps them reflect more on reading, and on the other hand it helps the researcher get more insights into the reading strategies they have used. Then, the data is analyzed by using SPSS.

The instrument of this study is a questionnaire, SPRS, which mainly focuses on the strategies the readers employ in reading poetry. This questionnaire consists of few general information questions (like age or sex) at the beginning, and scaled questions using the Likert scale of five options to elicit the participants' priorities.

Lee and Oxford (2008) suggest that questionnaires are useful in measuring students' reading strategy awareness. Similarly, strategy checklists are useful in identifying strategies used on a just completed task. In this study the researcher will use Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) modified SORS reading strategy scheme, called SPRS, for 35 participants in order to get familiar with the students' different reading strategies.

SORS is selected meticulously by comparing several other surveys of different decades to compare the improvement through time. Among these surveys were Block (1986), and Carrell et al (1998) as the leading figures in the area of reading strategy. Their comparison has been provided in the previous section. This comparison shows that SORS is the most complete one among the other lists.

The other reason that lead SORS to be selected is that many researchers adopted and adjusted it to their studies. As Ebrahimi (2016) mentioned, since process of reading is similar in either digital or print reading, the reason of the usage of SORS as the original source questionnaire can be understood. For example, Anderson (2003) investigated the online reading strategies in English language context. He developed Online SORS (OSORS) from SORS to measure the metacognitive reading strategies. The result from OSORS is similar to SORS in case that there is not significant differences in the use of OSORS between English participants. In another research, Anderson (2003) also adapted SORS to develop the Online Reading Strategy Instrument (ORSI) to measure students' reading strategies. Some other studies that employed SORS for their English participants and got the same results took place in India (Karbalaei 2010), Hungary (Sheorey and Baoczcy 2007), Japan (Sheorey, Kamimura and Freiermuth 2007), Korea (Kim and Jung 2007), and Taiwan (Wu 2005).

The use of reading strategies in this research is measured by a developed Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) adapted SORS from MARSI, Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (Mokhtari and Reichard 2002), that is a measurement instrument for the awareness and perceived reading strategy use of English speaking students. However, MARSI has some limitations to assess non-native English students; therefore, it was adapted to be suitable for non-native English students and their new measurement tool was named SORS which intended to measure the metacognitive awareness and perceived reading strategy use of adult non-native English students. Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) had few changes on MARSI to get to SORS: 1) refining the words for non-native English learners to easily understand phrases, 2) adding two strategies, and 3) deleting two items. Then, this survey was field-tested by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) at two universities and the results was that the survey is reliable in awareness measurement and perceived reading strategy use for English readers with the Cronbach's Alpha of =.89. Although, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) did not report the reliability of this survey, Anderson (2004) examined it and calculated that the Chronbach's alpha coefficient for SORS is .85.

Therefore, further research prove that the survey is suitable for academic reading context as the reading assessment was used in this study. As it was explained earlier, Survey Of Reading Strategies measures three categories of reading strategies which are global, problem solving, and support strategies (Mokhtari and Sheorey 2002) as is shown in Table 3 below. However, for the sake of not confusing the participants, the category identifications are not written in the questionnaires of the participants of this study. These categories are based on the factor analysis and theoretical considerations of MARSI.

The 30 items of the SORS are arranged with a 5-point Likert scale from 1, "I never or almost never do this," to 5, "I always or almost always do this;" therefore, a higher number means a higher frequency of using a reading strategy. SORS participants had to circle the number of the statement that showed their frequency of using a strategy. The average number shows how often the participants believe they use reading strategies.

The survey was examined for its reliability since reliability is an important measure of an instrument. The reliability test ensured that if it administers again to the same participants, the instrument would give similar responses. The internal reliability of the scale of this questionnaire was examined by Cronbach's alpha which is an index of reliability to show if a set of items measure a single construct. After the reliability test, the results showed that this instrument also has a high internal consistency of items.

For in this study, the original SORS is modified to measure poetry reading strategy use. Therefore,

below is the comparison table of SORS and SPRS. However, the detailed explanation of how getting to SPRS is coming more in depth later.

Table 4. Comparison of SORS and SPRS in terms of the items

Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002)	This study (SPRS)
13 GLOBAL STRATEGIES:	13 GLOBAL STRATEGIES:
1. setting purpose for reading	1. setting purpose for poetry reading
2. using prior knowledge	2. using prior knowledge
3. previewing text before reading	3. previewing poetry before reading
4. checking if content fits purpose	4. checking if content fits purpose
5. noting text characteristics	5. noting poetry characteristics
6. determining what to read closely	6. determining what to read closely
7. using text features	7. using text features
8. using context clues	8. using context clues
9. using typographical aids	9. analyzing and evaluating
10. analyzing and evaluating	10. checking understanding
11. checking understanding	11. predicting or guessing poetry meaning
12. predicting or guessing text meaning	12. getting information
13. confirming predictions	13. making judgment and opinion
8 PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES:	9 PROBLEM SOLVING STRATEGIES:
14. reading slowly and carefully	14. reading slowly and carefully
15. trying to stay focused	15. trying to stay focused
16. adjusting reading rate	16. adjusting reading rate
17. paying close attention	17. paying close attention
18. pausing and thinking	18. pausing and thinking
19. visualizing information	19. visualizing information
20. re-reading	20. re-reading
21. guessing meaning of unknown words	21. guessing meaning of unknown words
	22. getting emotionally engaged
9 SUPPORT STRATEGIES:	8 SUPPORT STRATEGIES:
22. note taking	23. note taking
23. reading aloud	24. reading aloud
24. underlining	25. underlining
25. using reference materials	26. paraphrasing
26. paraphrasing	27. finding relationship among poetry ideas
27. finding relationship among text ideas	28. asking oneself questions
28. asking oneself questions	29. translating from English to L1
29. translating from English to L1	30. thinking in both languages
30. thinking in both languages	

In addition, in case of validity of this survey, two university lecturers who were familiar with the area of reading strategy were asked to confirm that the content of the present survey is suitable for this study and to assure that the survey is valid. Therefore, it is believed that the survey and its results are reliable for future studies.

4. Results and Discussions

The study was conducted with thirty-five students, sixteen males and nineteen females as shown in table below.

Table 5. Gender of the participants

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	19	54	54
Male	16	46	100
Total	35	100	100

Statistics show that the reliability score of SPRS with Cronbach's Alpha = .879 which is based on standardized items (N = 30) is almost as high as the reliability level of SORS with Cronbach's Alpha = .850 with the same number of strategies. This statistics like all statistics in this study were rated using SPSS. The highly matched statistics can also show that no serious problem was found in the course of this study.

The questionnaire consists of 5 demographic questions and 32 Likert scale items originally. Principle component analysis with varimax rotation is applied on the 32 items resulted in three loaded factors which consists of Global, Problem-Solving and Support variables. Two items were omitted from questionnaire as their values are smaller than .5. After rotation, the first factor, global strategies, accounted for 27.584% of the variance, the second factor, Problem-Solving strategies, accounted for 10.314% of the variance, and Support strategies, as the third factor accounted for 9.231% of the variance. In other words, the mostly used category of strategies in order are Global, Problem-Solving, and at the end, Support strategies.
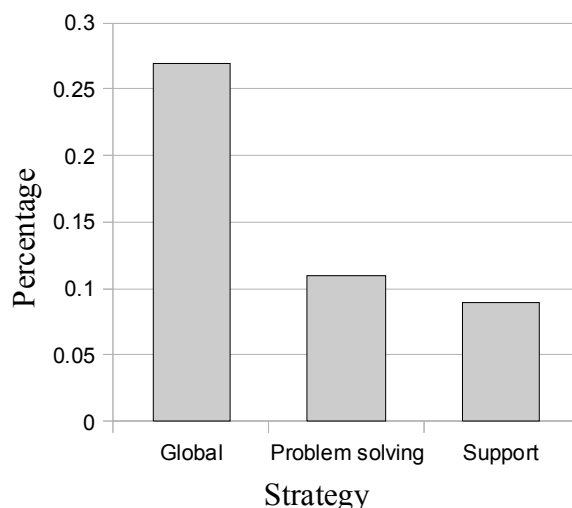

Figure 1. Most common type of poetry reading strategies

Table 6 shows the factor loading variables or the factor matrix for all three variables or strategy categories. Factor matrix explains factor loading as well as correlation between each of variables and factors (Green *et al* 2000). Measures, which are more than .5 for the variables, show that the variables can be used to represent the factor (Field 2005). The bold faced factors are much less than .5 so they will be deleted from the main survey items.

In sum, this study allows the researcher to detect the main strategies that are commonly used. The difference between the original SORS and the modified version, SPRS, is in the number of strategies that are reduced due to the small amount of the reliability of two items, and on the other hand, addition of three other items that lack in the original SORS but is a need in this study of reading poetry.

Table 6. Comparison of SORS and SPRS in terms of the number of items

Types of items	Strategies / Stances	SORS	SPRS
Open ended	Demographical	0	5
5-point Likert scale	Global	13	13
5-point Likert scale	Problem solving	8	9
5-point Likert scale	Support	9	8
	Total	30	35

The reduced items are two of the global strategies which one was not in the pilot study at all, using typographical aids such as boldface or italic, due to the irrelevance to this study and the other obtained a low amount of reliability. The other omitted strategy was one from the support strategies with the same reason of low reliability.

The three added items includes two global strategy and one problem solving strategy which are set as the last items of the list. Item number 28, "*I get emotionally engaged with the poetry*," number 29, "*I get as much information as possible from the poetr*y," and number 30, "*I make my own judgment and opinion on the poetry*".

Table 7. Rank order of the factor loading of the strategies

No	Items in rank of order in use in each category	Global	Problem Solving	Support
1	I set a purpose in mind when I read English poetry.	.832		
2	I think about what I know to help me understand the poetry that I read.	.780		
3	I take a general view at the English poetry to check what it is about before reading it.	.680		
4	I think if the content of the English poetry suits my reading purpose.	.670		
5	I get as much information as possible from the poetry.	.660		
6	I first review the English poetry by noting its characteristics like length and organization.	.650		
7	When reading English poetry, I decide what to read closely or what to ignore.	.650		
8	I draw tables, figures, or pictures to increase my understanding of the English poetry.	.620		
9	I use context clues to understand the English poetry better.	.590		
10	I critically analyze and evaluate the information in the English poetry.	.537		
11	I make judgment and opinion on the poetry.	.540		
12	I check my understanding when I face new information in the English poetry.	.521		
13	I try to guess the content of the English poetry when I read.	.501		
14	I check if my guesses about the English poetry are right or wrong.	**.219**		
15	I stop from time to time and think about the English poetry I am reading.		.793	
16	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration in reading English poetry.		.719	
17	When the English poetry gets difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.		.631	
18	When the English poetry gets difficult, I re-read it for better understanding.		.604	
19	When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words in the English poetry.		.591	
20	I set my English poetry reading rate according to what I read.		.555	
21	I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand the English poetry that I am reading.		.486	
22	I get emotionally engaged with the poetry.		.485	
23	I try to visualize information to remember the English poetry I read.		.475	

24	I go back and forth in the English poetry to find relationships among ideas in it.			.829
25	When reading English poetry, I translate it to my native language.			.706
26	When reading English poetry, I think about information in both English and my mother tongue.			.673
27	When the English poetry gets difficult, I read aloud to understand what I read.			.640
28	I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the English poetry.			.504
29	I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to understand the English poetry I read better.			.486
30	I take notes while reading English poetry to understand what I read.			.444
31	I underline or circle information in the English poetry to remember it.			.430
32	I use reference materials (e.g., dictionary) to understand when I read English poetry.			**.335**
	Variance (%)	27.584	10.314	9.231
	Eigenvalue	8.275	3.294	2.769

5. Conclusion

The results of this study go in line with many other research that show readers tend to use reading strategies often in their reading (Chen and Chen 2015). A simple analysis of data of this study show more commonly used strategies which in order are: 1. setting a purpose in mind when reading (global strategy), 2. going back and forth to find relationships among ideas (support strategy), 3. stopping from time to time to think (problem solving strategy), 4. thinking about the background knowledge to understand (global strategy), 5. getting back on track when loosing concentration (problem solving strategy), 6. translating to L1 (support strategy) as is shown in Figure 2.
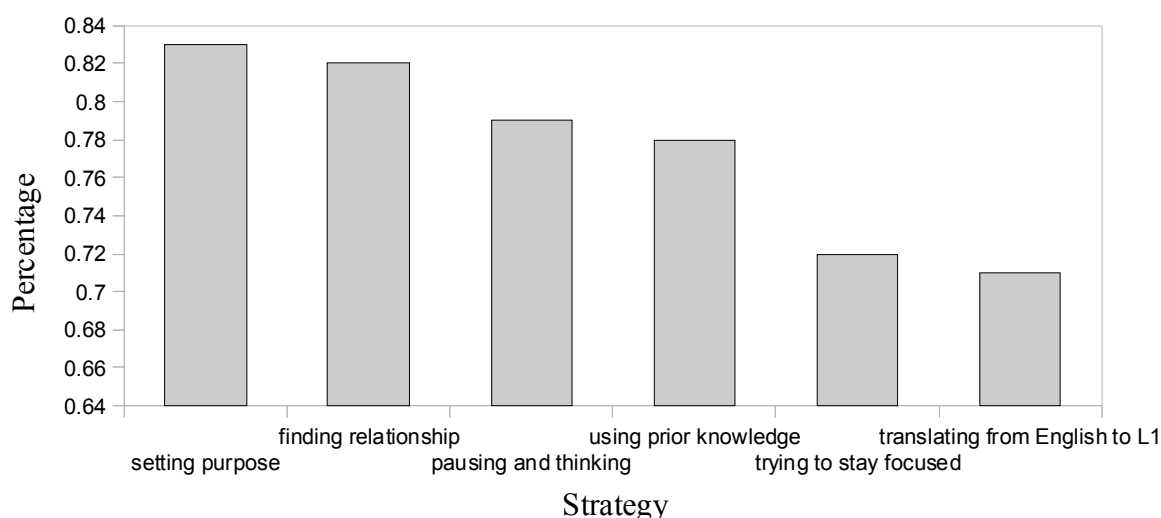

FIGURE 2. Most common poetry reading strategies

This result reveals that having a purpose at the pre-reading level of reading is considered as the most important factor for EFL students in reading English poetry. However, all the other highly used strategies by EFL readers are during-reading strategies and post-reading strategies are not that important for them.

The most common during-reading strategy that they use is going back and forth in the text trying to

find relationships among ideas. This shows that they intend to understand poetry rather than just reading the lines fast to finish the text. This can be proved by the immediate next strategy which is pausing from time to time to think about the poetry whenever there is a difficulty in understanding. Therefore, EFL readers prefer to make their meanings out of the text and interpret it for their better understanding. To get the message conveyed in the poetry, the EFL students refer to their own background knowledge so often as well, which is in turn the forth most prevalent strategy they tend to use. Still, during reading poetry, the readers try to stay focused by getting back on track once that they feel they loose their concentration so that they do not get out of the atmosphere of the poetry. This can help the readers to keep in line with the lines and emphasizes on their efforts to get the meaning. The last but not least strategy that many EFL poetry readers employ to help them understand the meanings and messages is translation from English to their mother tongue which seems the easiest way of understanding and interpreting a text. Obviously, any time the readers encounter difficulty understanding the meaning of the lines, they tend to simplify the concepts for themselves by one to one word translation to make it more tangible and comprehensible because basically understanding is easier in the first language rather than the foreign language.

In short, this study leads to the conclusion that the six above mentioned strategies are the main commonly used strategies in the study which are surprisingly much more than the other strategies. The results are similar to the findings of other recent research as well (Chen and Chen 2015; Ebrahimi and Zaidah 2015; Kasemsap and Lee 2015). It is recommended for future research to direct other types of literary works as well to give a more in depth insight to literature teachers and students about their way to read literature.

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