



IRANIAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON POETRY READING STRATEGIES

Shirin Shafiei Ebrahimi,

Yeo Kee Jiarⁱ

Faculty of Education,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia,
Malaysia

Abstract:

Poetry for teaching English is widely adopted but understanding poetry is problematic. Reading strategies can address this problem. Therefore, in this research, the most common strategies that Iranian post-graduate students perceive that they use were studied. This study adopted the quantitative method design in data analysis. The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire (*Survey of Poetry Reading Strategies* or SPRS). The participants were selected based on convenience random sampling. Sixty participants took part in the quantitative data collection. Results from the questionnaire showed use of Problem Solving strategies such as *re-reading* was perceived to be used more often than Global strategies such as *making judgment and opinion* and Support strategies such as *analysing and evaluating*. This study contributes the useful reading strategies in reading poetry by Iranian students. These results can be useful for both students and teachers in reading poetry.

Keywords: SPRS, poetry, reading strategies

1. Introduction

For this study, poetry is the subject of interest as it is very much different in essence with any other texts. In poetry, as is mentioned in Ebrahimi (2012b), the focus is more on the linguistic features rather than content; the connotative meaning is bolder than the denotative one; several meanings can be taken from a simple word or phrase rather than only a single meaning; the internal structures are more important than the external structures; and there is a non-linear relationship between the elements of a poem than a linear relationship. Therefore, studying poetry can be intriguing.

The strategies that the learners use in reading the materials play a central role in their learning experiences and are a firm determinant of academic success.

ⁱ Correspondence: email shirin.shafiei@gmail.com, kjyeo@utm.my

Concurrently, studies have shown a correlation between learners' beliefs about language learning and their choice of strategies (Ebrahimi, 2012a). However, understanding learner beliefs about language learning is significant to understand strategies and plan appropriate instructions.

Although there have been a lot of studies on reading strategies in EFL/ESL context, only a few referred to the issue of reading strategies of poetry in a foreign/second language. The other issue is that as Mokhtari and Sheorey (2008) explain, the number of reading strategies that are used in second or foreign reading is more than that in L1, therefore this gap in the literature identified the research on this topic to gain an understanding of Iranian university students' reading poetry and their reading strategies.

This research is one of the first few studies that aim to recognize the reading strategies of poetic texts. The significance of the study is that there is not much research on reading strategies of poetry (Ebrahimi, 2011) but by this study, the practitioners and researchers are helped to design more appropriate poetry reading programs for the students.

The literature that the researcher reviewed, did not deal directly with reading strategies of poetry. The reason can be the difficulty of reading literature and poetic texts in comparison to non-literary texts (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2015). Using her experience as an English lecturer, the researcher knew that it is hard for Persian-native speakers to read English poetic texts (Sadeghi and Zarei, 2013). The researcher wishes that this study be useful for the English literature teachers in assisting the students to understand L2 poetry reading and provide teachers and students with knowledge in EFL students' thinking processes to improve their understanding. Moreover, at the end, this research offers solutions for second and foreign language teaching, literature teachers, and students.

Studies reveal that using reading strategies leads to a great success in EFL reading comprehension. Research shows that although many attention has been absorbed to usefulness and teachability of reading strategies and its effectiveness on the students' performance (Zhang, 2008), reading strategy instruction and usage is not popular in Iranian educational system; therefore, the present study focuses on research in reading strategies as the basic element that improves comprehension of poetries.

In Iranian EFL context, reading is the most important way to learn English. Iranian students are not exposed to English language, the common teaching method is grammar-based, and the students do not have much interaction with native English speakers and teachers. University students, in Iran, have to read a lot of academic English texts to master their field. However, many students enter the university without being prepared in terms of English reading demands. Successful readers are those learners who consciously use reading strategies at the right time for a better reading comprehension experience. In order to have strategic readers, it is essential to develop their reading strategies which have a very significant positive relationship with reading ability and learners' academic achievement (Ahmadi and Gilakjani, 2012; Mokhtari and Sheorey, 2002).

Strategic learning and reading are growing topics in Iran and recently many researchers tend to study on these areas which result in a huge interesting findings regarding EFL learning in Iran. However, the Iranian community who live abroad are of the groups of English learners as well who did not study on them so far. As the population of this study is the Iranian postgraduate students who had studied English Literature in their undergraduate studies in Iran and are busy doing their postgraduate in English major in Malaysia, here we concentrate on their literature background. In all branches of English major in Iran (such as English Literature, translation, or English teaching), students have to pass a number of compulsory literature courses including English poetry along their main courses. Therefore, all English graduates are more or less familiar with the literary concepts and English literary works, especially English poetry.

On the other hand, as Persian (Iranians' mother tongue) is known as a poetic and melodious language itself, Iranians tend to read and know more poetries of other languages. Literature and poetry which dated back to several thousand years, are the most common literate materials used in present Iran. Students of English language in Iran are among the luckiest undergraduates in this regard, as they have more chances during their academic studies to read poetry which is of most Iranians' taste. Studying poetry is one of the main courses that these students have to take to know more about poets.

From all that have been written on the problems of teaching poetry, poetry, more than any other genres, elicits attentions from students and teachers (Ebrahimi, 2011). Therefore, the issue of one interpretation of the teacher on one hand and the multiple interpretations of the students on the other hand counts.

In short, the research gap for this study is that the reading strategies of English poetry by Iranian students are not identified; therefore, to explore these strategies in reading poetry, the researcher decided to conduct this research to widen the body of knowledge of English poetry reading. Accordingly, the following issue is raised in doing this research that the need to understand what readers do and what strategies they use in order to understand a poem. Therefore, the main research question is: what strategies do Iranian postgraduate students generally perceive they use for reading English poetry?

The significance of this study lies in this understanding that literature readers need proper reading strategies to improve their reading skill. This study is important since its aim is to discover these useful strategies. Therefore, the focus of this study is mainly on the strategies that Iranian readers employ to read poetry as a piece of literary text. The data of this study is elicited from Iranian university students and the poetry reading strategies are mainly the focus. The observed strategies support the understanding that it is beneficial to familiarize them to the students in order to have a more effective poetry reading.

This study contributes to providing a comprehensive picture of Iranian postgraduate students' reading strategy use when they read poetry in English. This study helps literature teachers understand how the Iranian postgraduate students

employ the reading strategies. It also provides literature teachers with information on what reading strategies their students use when reading poetry in English. Furthermore, the teachers will recognize how English readers use reading strategies differently, especially in terms of types and frequency. This information is useful to the literature teachers, who consequently could modify their teaching to incorporate training on those reading strategies when reading poetry, and thus help their students, especially low proficiency students, achieve higher levels of reading poetry comprehension.

The focus on reading strategies for non-native English speakers in this study is intended to inform those investigating about these students to improve reading comprehension of English poetry. It is not easy to believe that how students will be able to achieve their academic goals without a high level of reading proficiency (Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2008). This study may be helpful to determine effective reading strategies of poetry for these students. It provides literature teachers and faculty at institutions of higher education with guidance for better English literature reading instruction for non-native English speaking students. Exploring reading strategies and a relationship between the first and foreign languages in reading strategies may aid these educators in improving their teaching approaches and pedagogies. This may enhance the ESL/EFL students' reading comprehension.

Due to the objectives, this study is useful for several groups of people, who can benefit from the results: one group is students to express their ideas, difficulties, and challenges about different reading strategies. The second group is literature teachers to express their ideas about effective reading strategies; this knowledge provides literature teachers with a better understanding of their students' satisfaction with their language classes. The knowledge helps English instructors in incorporating in their teaching effective reading strategies to help learners develop their procedural knowledge. In this regard, the students become more effective and proficient literature readers who are able to employ good reading strategies while processing English poetries. Third group is the administrators who can use the results of this study to provide a perfect curriculum for poetry studies.

As stated earlier, this study is expected to identify what strategies Iranian postgraduate university students use when they read poetry in English. Since the findings of this study reveal how the readers use strategies to construct meaning from literary texts, especially poetry, students will benefit from the findings of this study by reflecting on their own reading and realizing some of the hindering factors which impede their reading. They will also understand the usefulness of strategies that proficient readers use and apply them to relieve comprehension problems.

The findings from this study can be used as a guideline for teachers to figure out what strategies are more effective in teaching as well as reading poetry, therefore they would know how to teach students a repertoire of reading strategies that would facilitate students' adjustment to the different types of poetries that they read. In addition, teachers will understand different types of difficulties their students encounter during the literary reading process so that they can address them

accordingly. Findings can also assist English language and literature teachers to better provide much needed support for their students when they are learning English language and literature.

The findings might help provide more effective EFL/ESL pedagogy and so motivate students to read more English texts such as literary or poetic texts. These insights may help policy makers and educators to better understand the situation of EFL/ESL students and therefore develop programs with the aim of providing better support for EFL/ESL students and increase their success in reading English literary texts such as poetry. The study also invites more researchers to extend the scope of the current study and continue to offer significant advantages for the sake of both teaching and learning practices. Taking all these into consideration in practice, the research have to be based on a number of theoretical platform which follows in the next section.

2. Review of Literature

Reading and understanding poetry can be difficult for the readers (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2014). The difficulty of reading literature and poetic texts in comparison to non-literary texts can be the reason of lack of enough studies on this area (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2015). However, it does not mean that the readers are not able to feel the poem that they read. When we read a poem, we draw on our reservoir of past experience with others and the world (Rosenblatt, 2005). A successful plan is suggested in teaching English by means of poetry to the English language learners (Ebrahimi, 2016).

There are many studies on factors affecting the reading in the Iranian context. For example, the relationship between reading strategy awareness and Iranian students' academic status (Javadi, et al, 2010); reading strategy use among good and poor Iranian students (Shokrpour and Nasiri, 2011); and the relationship between reading self-efficacy beliefs, reading strategy use and level of reading comprehension of Iranian readers (Nasiri and Zaferanieh, 2012). The result of all studies shows that there are significant correlations between all of the above various factors on the use of reading strategies among Iranian students.

However, many Iranian students, who have been under English instruction for at least 11 years on average (the same average years of the participants of this study), still struggle with their English learning and face difficulty when reading poems in English (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2016). This study shows the most effective strategies that students believe that assist them in reading poetry.

This research focuses on Iranian students' perceived poetry reading strategies. Therefore, the process that the participants of this study go through to form their perceptions is a noticeable point of this study. The present section begins with a wide discussion on the roots of this research providing an in depth investigation on issues in literature reading that leads to good understanding in the field. The roots of this research are from related sources namely Reader response theory, literature reading, and reading strategy. However, all together they form the fundamentals of this research. It was important to consider studies that examined literature reading, reading

strategies, and methodological issues on what they read. These main roots of this study made it easy to identify this type of research and clarify the research questions. Therefore, this section is an overview of relevant literature to this study. First of all, it elaborates on the essence of literary works especially on poetry and poetry reading, and theories supporting them. Then, it provides a brief presentation of current theories on literature and language reading. After that, reading strategies and their characteristics are explained. After examining the theories, there is an explanation on the main instrument of this study. Finally, their characteristics are explained as the reading strategies of the poems in this study are going to be categorized according to its strategy categorization. In this section, the researcher discusses how the theories and methodology, which are going to be used, helps in the progress of the study.

Reading and understanding poetry can be difficult for the readers (Ebrahimi, 2017). However, it does not mean that the readers are not able to feel the poem that they read. Poetry is a means to express material senses by an imaginative language that reconfigures nature via modes of projection such as personification. If one wants to know poetry, defining its essence is not helpful. However, it is helpful to explain why poetry, but not the other literary genres, is appropriate for this study. Poetry is a highly accessible literature because it may be performed, sung, written, quoted, and observed: all in as long or as brief a time as the audience and performer would give it. Lewis and Robb (2007) show that poems are concisely to the heart of a topic. In a few minutes one can use a poem to connect students to the topic in memorable ways. A short poem can acquaint students with a topic quickly. Rosenblatt (2005) suggests that when we read a poem, we draw on our reservoir of past experience with others and the world. Drawing on past experience can be helpful when teaching students who do not have much experience with the target language.

Ebrahimi (2016) report a successful plan in teaching English by means of poetry to the English language learners. Although they do not offer much data on explicit classroom implementation and the final language products by the students, they claim in succeeding with the poetry related activities in their English language classes.

Fay and Whaley (2004) refer to poetry reading as an activity to develop deep understanding of texts in the target language and increase fluency among English language learners. While the sentiment fits their target language, their proposed idea of "reading and writing with English language learners" occupies only a one-paragraph explanation. They recommend it is better that a poem is read several times. They believe that if students speak a response after each poetry reading, they will be more fluent in their oral skills as well.

Since this study aims to develop a reading strategy model for poetry reading, a more detailed overview is taken to reading strategies. As studies on strategies of poetry reading is rare, therefore, the accounts given here deals with strategies of reading in literary and general texts. Although poetry and passage are two different genres, perhaps some insights can be gained in the studies that are discussed in this section.

Therefore, the researcher provides analyses of studies on reading strategies in L2 contexts, and then she reviews some of the recent studies on the area. The contributions

of these studies give rationales for using the suitable approaches as the theoretical framework of this study. Therefore in this study, the definition of reading strategy follows Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) descriptions of which reading strategies mean 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.

This study adjusts Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) SORS which uses another classification scheme to classify the reading strategies. SORS as the instrument of this study classifies the reading strategies to three different types of strategies: Global, Problem-Solving, and Support strategies. The reason of this choice is in the studies that follow below.

On the other hand, a review of literature shows many studies on the use of reading strategies for non-native English students. Researchers wish to understand reading strategy use of non-native English speaking readers (Mokhtari and Reichard, 2004; Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2008). Research also show that non-native English readers use a variety of reading strategies (Mokhtari and Reichard, 2004; Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2008). They also show that L1, L2, or FL readers use different reading strategies. A meticulous study shows a number of delicate differences between these groups in specific reading strategies.

In summary, from the above discussion, several points can be inferred. First, proficient L2 readers mostly extract meaning from texts and use more top-down strategy than less-proficient readers. Second, less proficient readers focus on decoding or bottom-up processes when reading a text. Third, reading strategies are neither inherently good nor bad. Forth, proficient or less proficient L2 readers do not significantly differ in terms of the number and types of reading strategies. Fifth, language background is important in the reading strategy use.

This study enjoyed using questionnaire as the instrument. Questionnaires are considered the most efficient and comprehensive method of assessing the frequency of strategy use (Oxford, 1996). According to Oxford, questionnaires are also useful in measuring strategy use because through them it is possible to document each student's typical strategies across a variety of tasks. As Oxford (1996) says, the advantages of questionnaires are that they are quick, easy to administer, not threatening, and little possibility of desirability response bias. Lee and Oxford (2008) also suggest that questionnaires are helpful in measuring students' awareness of their reading strategy use. In a similar vein, strategy checklists are useful in identifying strategies used on a just completed task.

Sheorey and Mokhtari (2008) had 150 English L1 as well as 152 ESL students in their study. Their participants completed the earlier version of the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) inventory (2001) including 28 items about perceived academic reading strategy use. Both groups of native English speakers and ESL students reported similar frequency of use of Global Reading Strategies (GLOB) and Problem Solving Strategies (PROB); but the use of Support Reading Strategies (SUP) was significantly

different between the two groups. The ESL readers depended on Support Reading Strategies more frequently than the native English readers.

However later, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) adapted SORS from Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSIS) developed by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002), which is an instrument to measure the awareness and perceived use of reading strategies of native English speaking students. However, MARSIS 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 perceived use of reading strategies of adolescence and adults non-native English students.

For SORS, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) made few revisions on MARSIS: 1) refining the wording for non-native English speakers to easily understand the items, 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 measuring the awareness and perceived use of reading strategies for non-native English students 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 $.85$.

In terms of categorization, Mokhtari and Sheorey categorized the strategies in 3 groups. The following is a brief description of each category of the SORS and the number of items within each category. Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) identified the three categories as:

Global strategies (GLOB) are the intentional, carefully planned techniques that the learners use to monitor or manage their reading, for example having a purpose in mind, previewing the text according to the length or organization, or using typographical aids, tables or figures. Problem Solving strategies (PROB) are the actions and procedures that readers use in working with the text. They are localized, focused techniques that are used when problems arise in understanding the text; for example adjusting the reading speed if the text gets simple or difficult, guessing the meaning, and rereading. Support strategies (SUP) are basic support mechanisms that help the reader to understand the text, for example using a dictionary, note taking, underlining, or highlighting.

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. The SORS participants had to circle the number of the statement that showed the frequency of using a strategy. The average number shows how often the participants perceive that they use the reading strategies.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to identify the reading strategies used by Iranian university student readers. Therefore for this purpose, the students' use of reading strategies was

identified by a questionnaire. The quantitative study was conducted with 30 Iranian English literature students at tertiary level in Malaysia in 2017. All of the participants of the study are homogeneous in terms of language proficiency knowing that all of them got IELTS score above 6.5. The instrument used in this study is SPRS, which mainly focuses on the strategies that the students employ while reading poetry. This instrument is considered as an effective tool in collecting the data (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2017). It consists of few general information questions (e.g. age and sex) at the beginning, and scaled questions using the Likert scale of five options to elicit the participants' priorities. The participants filled out the SPRS in about 10 to 15 minutes in general to check how much they perceive that they use each strategy and then their perceived poetry reading strategies are identified by help of descriptive statistics done by SPSS.

The purpose of this study is to identify the reading strategies used by Iranian postgraduate readers and investigate the similarities and differences of the use of reading strategies by Iranian poetry readers. Therefore for this purpose, the students' use of reading strategies was identified by a questionnaire. This study applies statistical analyses, a descriptive quantitative research method, to examine the data collected by this instrument. To show how this study was conducted, this section describes participants, instrument, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Design

This study enjoys a quantitative research design. For the research question, a questionnaire on reading strategy, the modified version of SORS that is called Survey of Poetry Reading Strategies (SPRS), is used. Since research shows that level of proficiency has an effect on the second or foreign language reading (Bernhardt, 2005; Koda, 2007), and thus there is a transfer or interaction between the proficiency level of the readers and the reading strategies they use, in this study all of the participants were selected purposefully to be in their postgraduate program in TESL.

The quantitative study was conducted with Iranian postgraduate TESL students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). All were chosen randomly among those who have a literature background that means they all have a Bachelor degree in English language and literature studying about four years about literary criticism, English poetry, English novel, English drama, and other English literature related subjects at the university. All the students signed a consent form for participating in the study.

After designing the questionnaire, the researcher did a pilot study first with 25 TESL postgraduate students at UTM to check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Once that she was assure of the reliability and validity of the questionnaire she decided to take 60 UTM students in the survey based on previous literature and the saturation point. The number of participants selected is sixty, considering the other studies such as He (2008) with 59 participants which has lower number of participants. The researcher planned to choose the participants homogeneously to ensure that the collected data is generalizable. This researcher used a quantitative research design and designed the Survey of Poetry Reading Strategies

(SPRS) instrument to explore the participants' strategy use in English poetry reading. When the researcher gathered the data, she analysed them using SPSS.

3.2 Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study is SPRS (a questionnaire), which mainly focuses on the strategies that the students employ while reading poetry. This questionnaire consists of few general information questions (e.g. age and sex) at the beginning, and scaled questions using the Likert scale of five options to elicit the participants' priorities (See the Appendix). In this study researcher explained Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) modified SORS reading strategies scheme, called SPRS, for 60 participants in order to get familiar with the students' different reading strategies.

SORS is selected purposefully 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 Section 2. This comparison proves that SORS is the most complete questionnaire so far.

The other reason that leads the SORS to be selected is that many researchers adopted it and adjusted it to their studies both in EFL and ESL contexts. For example, Anderson (2003) investigates the online reading strategies in EFL and ESL contexts and Ebrahimi (2016) found that the results work well. He developed Online SORS (OSORS) from SORS to measure the reading strategies used by EFL and ESL readers. The results from OSORS are similar to SORS in case that there are not significant differences in the use of OSORS between the EFL and the ESL participants. In another research, Anderson (2003) also adapting SORS to develop the Online Reading Strategy Instrument (ORSI) to measure EFL and ESL students' reading strategies. Some other studies that employed SORS for their EFL participants and got the same results are Taiwan (Wu, 2005), Hungary (Sheorey and Baoczcy, 2007), Japan (Sheorey et al., 2008), Korea (Kim and Jung, 2007), and India (Karbalaeei, 2010).

The use of reading strategies in this study is measured by the developed Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). Research had proven that the survey is suitable for academic reading context as it was the reading assessment used in this study. As 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 2.2 previously. However, for the sake of not confusing the participants, the category identifications of GLOB, PROB and SUP are not written in the questionnaires of the participants of this study. These categories are based on MARSIS's factor analysis and theoretical considerations. Later Mokhtari and Sheorey kept the same categorization for their SORS.

In addition, the survey was examined for its reliability since reliability is an important measure of an instrument. The reliability test ensured that if it is administered again to the same participants, the instrument would give similar responses. The internal reliability of the scale of this questionnaire was examined by using Cronbach's alpha which is an index of reliability to show if a set of items

measured a single construct. After the reliability test, the results show that this instrument has a high internal consistency of the items with Cronbach's alpha of .879 for 30 items.

As in this study, the original SORS is modified to measure poetry reading strategy use, below is the comparison table of SORS and the modified version or SPRS; however, the detailed explanation of how getting to the modified SORS, SPRS, is explained in the pilot study section more in depth.

3.3 Data Collection

The participants filled out the SPRS (Appendix) to check how much they perceive that they use each strategy. This helps the participants reflect more on the reading and on the other hand it helps the researcher get more insights into the reading strategies they have used. SPRS as the main tool for collecting the quantitative data is originally taken from SORS (Mokhtari and Sheorey, 2002). The strategies listed in this survey are categorized in three groups of Global, Problem solving, and Support categories for a more clear understanding of the strategy differences. Sixty participants took part in filling out the questionnaire and in this way their perceived poetry reading strategies are identified by help of descriptive statistics done by SPSS.

3.4 Data Analysis

The procedure of data analysis of this study consists of the analysis of the data from the questionnaire for the perceived poetry reading strategies. As explained earlier, this instrument is considered as an effective tool in collecting the data. The detailed analysis and discussions will follow below for the pilot study and will continue in Section 4 for the main study.

The data was analysed quantitatively. In order to answer the research question, the analysis was done to get the findings, means, standard deviations, and percents of strategies. For the descriptive quantitative data analysis, the tool of SPRS was the procedure to extract the reading strategies. This tool includes thirty strategies in reading poetry. The participants had to choose their perception of poetry strategy use in a Likert scale. In order to analyse the data, SPSS was used to calculate the mean and standard deviation, and percent of each strategy as well as each category of strategies for the descriptive analysis of the data. The range in which each strategy falls into was also identified. A sample of more detailed analysis of quantitative data collection is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Samples of Response frequency for perceived strategies of poetry reading

Rank	SPRS Strategies	Mean	SD	%	Range
1	G13. making judgment and opinion	4.47	0.57	89.4	High
2	G12. getting information	4.33	0.63	86.6	High
3	G11. predicting poetry meaning	4.28	0.8	85.6	High

Data analysis of the study was performed during the data collection in 2017-2018. The goal of the analysis was to generate and obtain a better understanding of the strategies

that the participants were employing while reading English poetry. This allowed for holistic analysis of the data.

4. Data Analysis and Results

This study provides evidence about poetry reading strategies accumulated through the quantitative method. In Table 4.1, strategies are listed based on their effectiveness on students' perceptions. The detailed analysis of the data from the Survey of Poetry Reading Strategy (SPRS) revealed the Iranian poetry readers' perceptions.

Table 4.1: Response frequency for perceived strategies of poetry reading

SPRS Strategies	Mean	SD	%	SPRS Strategies	Mean	SD	%
1. making judgment and opinion	4.47	0.57	89.4	16. paraphrasing	3.75	1.11	75
2. getting information	4.33	0.63	86.6	17. checking understanding	3.73	0.99	74.6
3. predicting poetry meaning	4.28	0.8	85.6	18. analysing and evaluating	3.67	1.1	73.4
4. re-reading	4.18	0.38	83.6	19. finding relationship among poetry ideas	3.62	1.04	72.4
5. trying to stay focused	4.18	0.77	83.6	20. setting purpose for poetry reading	3.57	1.33	71.4
6. using prior knowledge	4.13	0.89	82.6	21. thinking in both languages	3.55	1.24	71
7. paying close attention	4.1	1.07	82	22. underlining	3.47	1.19	69.4
8. getting emotionally engaged	4.03	0.82	80.6	23. pausing and thinking	3.43	1.21	68.6
9. reading slowly and carefully	4.03	0.88	80.6	24. checking how content fits purpose	3.38	1.32	67.6
10. guessing meaning of unknown words	4.02	0.89	80.4	25. noting poetry characteristics	3.22	1.06	64.4
11. using context clues	3.97	0.8	79.4	26. reading aloud	3.22	1.37	64.4
12. adjusting reading rate	3.92	1.06	78.4	27. translating from English to L1	3.08	1.24	61.6
13. visualizing information	3.92	1.11	78.4	28. note taking	2.82	1.32	56.4
14. determining what to read closely	3.9	1.2	78	29. asking oneself questions	2.8	1.2	56
15. previewing poetry before reading	3.78	1.18	75.6	30. using text features	2.28	1.25	45.6

For these readers the following strategies seem to suit more: making judgment and opinion, getting information, predicting poetry meaning, re-reading, trying to stay focused, using prior knowledge, paying close attention, getting emotionally engaged, reading slowly and carefully, guessing meaning of unknown words. Most of the strategies that are important for the readers are among top-down reading strategies.

The first highly used strategies which the readers perceive they use more in reading poetry are making judgment and opinion, getting as much information as possible, followed by predicting poetry meaning. This shows that postgraduate poetry

readers like to think about the poetry and analyse the deep meanings to know more about the conveyed messages. The results also show that the participants perceive that they prefer to get cognitively prepared before and during poetry reading and actively process and analyse the poetry by using such strategies like using prior knowledge.

For the readers, re-reading and trying to stay focused are among the most highly used strategies in poetry reading in readers' perceptions. This means that readers perceive that they tend to read few times to get the deep meanings without being distracted. The next strategies are paying close attention, or reading slowly and carefully which are not strange to be in a close rank to their previous similar strategies. This shows that Iranian readers perceive that they use strategies that keep them in track of meaning making more than the rest of strategies.

Considering the mean scores of the strategies in Table 1, it is clearly illustrated that more strategies of SPRS items are perceived to be as the highly used strategies, and the only few of them are perceived as low ranked strategies that the readers believe they rarely use in their English poetry reading and are not as helpful for them in reading poetry. These strategies are using text features, asking oneself questions, note taking, and translating from English to L1.

The last strategy belonging to the low ranked mean group in SPRS is I draw tables, figures, or pictures to increase my understanding of the English poetry or simply using text features. This shows that poetry readers do not show that much interest to draw any figurative or pictorial designs or jot down any notes while reading poetry for their better understanding.

This result shows that it is the perception of the readers that they use most strategies highly in their poetry reading. In addition, the results seem to suggest that participants try to use strategies that help them build meanings.

Other research also found a very similar ranking order both at the top or bottom rankings (Abidin and Riswanto, 2012). However, only to be aware of the strategies does not guarantee their effective usage, but the readers have to be familiarized with their appropriate usage. As a result, practice can help to improve knowledge on reading strategies. In order to help readers to have a more efficient reading performance, they can be taught to use reading strategies.

The researcher's interest in doing this study on Iranian university students originates from her personal experience in teaching Iranian university students in the past, and it has been increased by her teaching experience of ESL university students in recent years. In her classes, she recognized that there is a huge need for Iranian university students to learn how to read and understand English poetry properly. However, it was not until she started her doctoral program at UTM that she began to learn about strategies and their relation to academic success. This is the belief of the researcher that although English proficiency is being improved in the society, English teachers have a lot more to do in terms of strategy instruction to the students in order to equip them with the acceptable level of English capacity for their academic performance and future life. However, many university Iranian students, who have been under English instruction for at least 11 years on average (the same average years of the

participants of this study), still struggle with their English learning and face difficulty when reading poems in English (Ebrahimi and Zainal, 2016).

This study tries to look into this situation more in depth. The situation which quantitative research alone is not able to find answers for the existing problems accurately through the measurements, by keeping a skeptical view to question assumptions and research-based effective practice, such as SPRS. Such statistical results are the evidence for SPRS's effectiveness on reading strategy awareness.

4.1 Overview of the Study

The review of literature shows that it is difficult to make generalizations across studies because of the huge variations in the way reading strategies are used. As a result, this study is explanatory to different fields of Iranian reading process and literature understanding. This study employs a quantitative research design in which 60 participants were chosen from the population of TESL postgraduate students at UTM. All of the participants of the study are homogeneous in terms of language proficiency.

Filling out the questionnaire took about 10 to 15 minutes for each participant. It was a tool with an intention to understand the participants' English poetry reading experience and their reading strategy awareness through SPRS intervention.

4.2 Findings of Perceived Poetry Reading Strategies

Before analysing the data, it is needed to check whether the data is normally distributed. A normal distributed data is a prerequisite to show the mean difference of the three categories of strategies – global, problem solving, and support. The data related to this study is parametric since it is related to the Likert scale of SPRS of which its range has value for each scale in inferential statistics.

4.2.1 Normal Probability Plot (Pplot)

Figure 4.1 shows the normality of the strategy use among Iranian postgraduate students. The linearity of the points means that the data in this research are normally distributed.

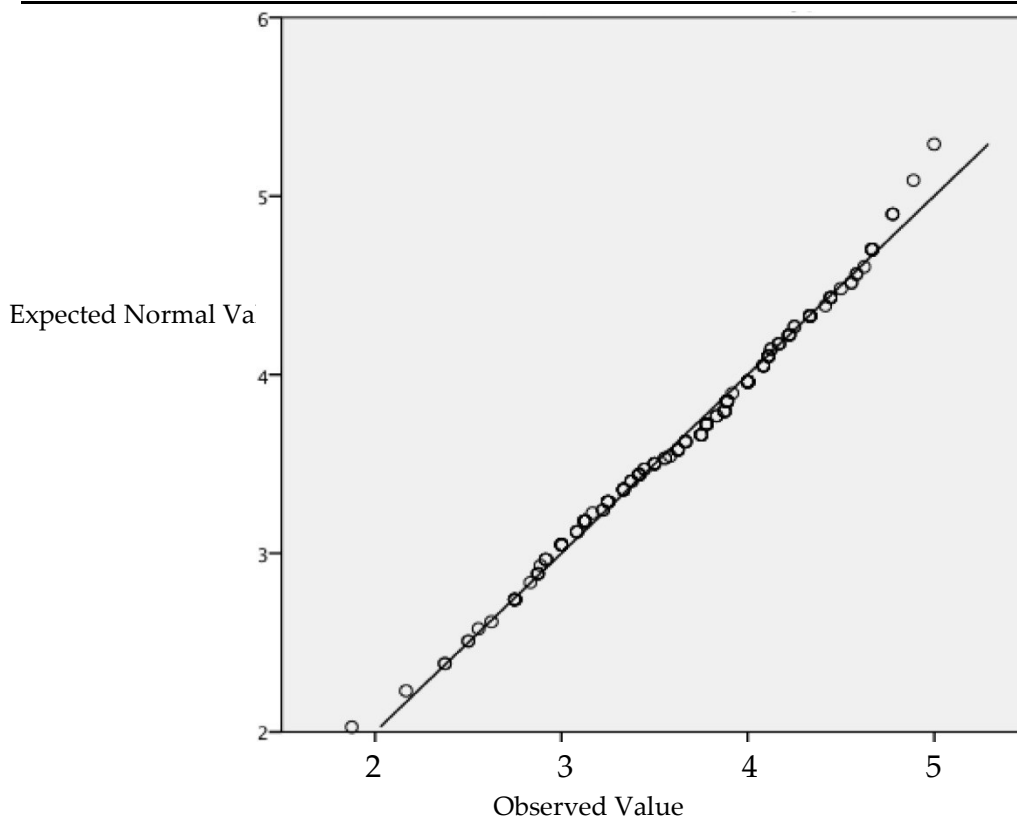


Figure 4.1: Normality of plot of strategies

4.2.2 Analysis and Discussion

Analysis of the questionnaire data serves to find out the answer of the research question. In order to investigate the frequency of each category of reading strategies - Global, Problem Solving, and Support strategies - descriptive statistics was employed. Based on calculating the means, three levels of strategy use are suggested by SORS (2002) as High (3.50 to 5.00), Medium (2.50 to 3.49), and Low (0.01 to 2.49). Many other studies which adapted SORS or employed it in their work used the same range for their research. Among them are Ahmad (2015), Hasan (2015), Islam et al. (2015), Park (2015), Taki (2015), Hanh (2014), Prichard (2014), Thao et al. (2014), Magogwe (2013), Madhumathi and Ghosh (2012), Abidin and Riswanto (2012), Genc (2011), Anderson (2003), Mokhtari and Reichard (2002). This helps to detect easily which group of strategies are more or less popular among TESL poetry readers.

Table 4.2: Range of levels of reading strategy use in SPRS

Usage	Mean range in SORS	Mean range in SPRS	Number	%
High	> 3.50	3.55 - 4.47	21	70
Medium	2.50 - 3.49	2.80 - 3.47	8	27
Low	< 2.49	2.28	1	3

Following Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) analysis, frequencies are counted and averaged to determine what type of strategies is used by the literature readers. The result shows that the higher the average, the more frequently they use the strategies. In

comparison to the standard mean range of SORS, the level of average scores can be interpreted easily in which 97% of the readers reported high to medium poetry reading strategy use (70% high strategy use and 27% medium), while only 3% low usage of the total strategies. It can be inferred that postgraduate poetry readers are able to plan, monitor and evaluate their own reading.

Among the three categories, the most frequent one is problem-solving strategy with the mean of 4.028, followed by global strategy (M=3.66), and then support strategy (M=3.29). The overall mean for the three categories of strategies is 3.6593 showing that participants are highly aware of strategies and can be considered high strategy users. Table 4.3 below is the illustration of the mean, standard error, level, percent, and the minimum and maximum level of each category which demonstrates the average usage of each category in their means and percentage.

Statistics shown in the table below shows that problem-solving category with the mean of 4.03 and standard deviation of 0.5 is the highest ranked category of poetry reading strategies. Next is Global category of strategies with the mean of 3.66 and standard deviation of 0.54. These two categories are both at the high level of usage based on the poetry readers' perceptions. The only Medium level category is Support category with the mean of 3.288 and standard deviation of 0.54. Similar findings are also reported by Islam et al. (2015), Hanh (2014), and Alhaqbani and Riazi (2012).

Table 4.3: Average usage of categories of strategies

Category	Mean	Std.	Range	%	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Problem Solving	4.03	0.5	High	80.6	3.89	4.16
Global	3.66	0.54	High	73.2	3.53	3.80
Support	3.29	0.54	Medium	65.8	3.15	3.42

Dependent Variable: Strategy

Table 4.3 shows that the distribution of data follows a normal line. It also shows that the standard deviation of different categories is so close to each other. The 95% confidence interval of means shows that the data were not overlapped with each other; therefore, the results can be generalizable and useable for other contexts or samples. This table is illustrated in Figures 4.2 showing the mean difference and accordingly the percentage difference between each category of strategies. Other studies such as Islam et al. (2015) also found the same order of categories for reading studies.

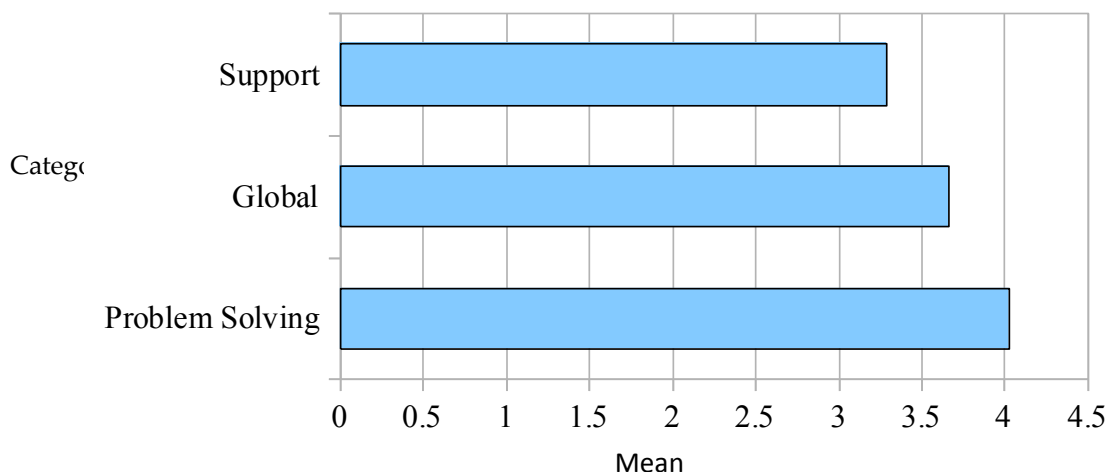


Figure 4.2: Average usage of categories of strategies

As the data is normal, it is possible to check if statistically the three categories of strategies have significant differences with each other as it was supposed to have.

Table 4.4: Multiple Comparisons

First factors	Second factors	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Problem Solving	Global	.36*	.096	.001	.14	.59
	Support	.74*	.096	.000	.51	.97
Global	Problem solving	-.36*	.096	.001	-.59	-.14
	Support	.37*	.096	.000	.15	.60
Support	Global	-.37*	.096	.000	-.60	-.15
	Problem Solving	-.74*	.096	.000	-.97	-.51

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Dependent Variable: Strategy

Tukey Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) test, Post Hoc Test

The post hoc test as shown in Table 4.4 also illustrates that the mean difference is statistically significant and therefore the three categories of strategies have significant difference to each other. The significant difference between the categories is shown by an asterisk mark beside the mean difference. The negative mean difference shows that the mean of the first factor, Global strategies, is lower than the mean of the second category or factor, Problem Solving. In conclusion, it is proved statistically that there is a significant difference between the categories of strategies with a significance of lower than .05.

An analysis of variance is conducted to investigate the mean difference of different categories of strategies, as measured by Survey of Poetry Reading Strategy (SPRS). Strategies are divided into three categories according to their functions, namely global, problem solving and support strategies. The interaction effect between these categories are statistically significant, $F(2, 179) = 29.7$. Therefore, there is a statistically

significant main difference between the categories. Post hoc comparisons in conjunction with Tukey HSD test show a double confirmation that the mean score for each category also differs significantly from either of the other categories. As a result, the difference of categories reaches statistical significance.

In order to present the findings systematically, the analyses are divided based on the three types of strategies namely Problem Solving strategies (section 4.3.2.1), Global strategies (section 4.3.2.2), and Support strategies (section 4.3.2.3). Findings of these reading strategies are based on mean scores with their standard deviation provided. Distribution of the same results in percentage for each category is shown in the tables below:

Table 4.5: Response frequency of each Likert scale for Problem Solving strategies

No	Problem Solving Strategies		Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1	P7. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.	Freq	0	0	16	17	27
		%	0	0	26.7	28.3	45
2	P4. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	Freq	2	3	10	17	28
		%	3.3	5	16.7	28.3	46.7
3	P9. I get emotionally engaged with the poetry.	Freq	1	0	13	28	18
		%	1.7	0	21.7	46.7	30
4	P6. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember the English poetry I read.	Freq	2	4	15	15	24
		%	3.3	6.7	25	25	40
5	P5. I stop from time to time and think about the English poetry I am reading.	Freq	5	7	19	15	14
		%	8.3	11.7	31.7	25	23.3
6	P2. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration in reading English poetry.	Freq	0	1	10	26	23
		%	0	1.7	16.7	43.3	38.3
7	P1. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand the English poetry that I am reading.	Freq	0	5	7	29	19
		%	0	8.3	11.7	48.3	31.7
8	P8. When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases used in the English poetry.	Freq	1	3	8	30	18
		%	1.7	5	13.3	50	30
9	P3. I adjust my English poetry reading speed according to what I am reading.	Freq	1	5	15	16	23
		%	1.7	8.3	25	26.7	38.3

Table 4.6: Response frequency of each Likert scale for Global strategies

No	Global Strategies		Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1	G13: 30. make my own judgment and opinion on the poetry.	Freq	0	0	2	28	30
		%	0	0	3.3	46.7	50
2	G12: 29. I get as much information as possible from the poetry.	Freq	0	0	5	30	25
		%	0	0	8.3	50	41.7
3	G11. I try to guess what the content of the English poetry is about when I read.	Freq	0	2	7	23	28
		%	0	3.3	11.7	38.3	46.7
4	G2. I think about what I know to help me understand the poetry that I read.	Freq	0	3	11	21	25
		%	0	5	18.3	35	41.7
5	G8. I use context clues to help me better understand the English poetry I am reading.	Freq	1	2	8	36	13
		%	1.7	3.3	13.3	60	21.7
6	G6. When reading English poetry, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	Freq	3	5	13	13	26
		%	5	8.3	21.7	21.7	43.3
7	G3. I take an overall view of the English poetry to see what it is about before reading it.	Freq	3	6	13	17	21
		%	5	10	21.7	28.3	35
8	G10. I check my understanding when I come across new information in the English poetry.	Freq	0	8	15	22	15
		%	0	13.3	25	36.7	25
9	G9. I critically analyse and evaluate the information presented in the English poetry.	Freq	2	7	16	19	16
		%	3.3	11.7	26.7	31.7	26.7
10	G1. I have a purpose in mind when I read English poetry.	Freq	5	9	14	11	21
		%	8.3	15	23.3	18.3	35
11	G4. I think about whether the content of the English poetry fits my reading purpose.	Freq	7	7	18	12	16
		%	11.7	11.7	30	20	26.7
	G5. I review the English poetry first by noting its characteristics like length	Freq	5	7	24	18	6
		%	8.3	11.7	40	30	10

12	and organization.						
13	G7. I draw tables, figures, or pictures to increase my understanding of the English poetry.	Freq	21	16	12	7	4
		%	35	26.7	20	11.7	6.7

Table 4.7: Response frequency of each Likert scale for Support strategies

No	Support Strategies		Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Usually	Always
1	S4. I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand the English poetry I read.	Freq	2	8	10	23	17
		%	3.3	13.3	16.7	38.3	28.3
2	S5. I go back and forth in the English poetry to find relationships among ideas in it.	Freq	2	5	21	18	14
		%	3.3	8.3	35	30	23.3
3	S8. When reading English poetry, I think about information in both English and my mother tongue.	Freq	4	10	11	19	16
		%	6.7	16.7	18.3	31.7	26.7
4	S3. I underline or circle information in the English poetry to help me remember it.	Freq	4	8	18	16	14
		%	6.7	13.3	30	26.7	23.3
5	S2. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	Freq	10	8	13	17	12
		%	16.7	13.3	21.7	28.3	20
6	S7. When reading English poetry, I translate from English into my native language.	Freq	5	17	17	10	11
		%	8.3	28.3	28.3	16.7	18.3
7	S1. I take notes while reading English poetry to help me understand what I read.	Freq	13	11	18	10	8
		%	21.7	18.3	30	16.7	13.3
8	S6. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the English poetry.	Freq	9	18	14	14	5
		%	15	30	23.3	23.3	8.3

Results of each of these types of strategies are discussed separately in order to ensure that all aspects of the strategies have been scrutinized in detail.

As it will be elaborated further in detail in the next sections about each type of strategies and the ranking of each strategy among its strategic category including global, problem solving, and support categories, here the rank order of the strategies without taking their type into consideration are presented to answer the research question.

Table 4.8 clearly illustrates that 21 out of 30 strategies of SPRS items are perceived to be as the highly used strategies, while 8 out of 30 strategies are considered as moderately used strategies, and the only 1 remaining strategy is perceived as low ranked strategy that the readers believe they rarely use in their English poetry reading. This result shows that it is the perception of the readers that they use most strategies highly in their poetry reading.

In this table, the highly used strategies are shown in high range, followed by a medium ranked strategies, followed by low ranked strategies. Simply as a conclusion, the ranking of high, medium and low strategies are shown below in Table 4.6 as the answer of the first research question. Other research like Anderson (2003) and Abidin and Riswanto (2012) also found a very similar ranking order in their studies both at the top or bottom rankings.

Table 4.8: Response frequency for perceived strategies of poetry reading

Rank	SPRS Strategies	Mean	SD	%	Range
1	G13. making judgment and opinion	4.47	0.57	89.4	High
2	G12. getting information	4.33	0.63	86.6	High
3	G11. predicting poetry meaning	4.28	0.8	85.6	High
4	P7. re-reading	4.18	0.38	83.6	High
5	P2. trying to stay focused	4.18	0.77	83.6	High
6	G2. using prior knowledge	4.13	0.89	82.6	High
7	P4. paying close attention	4.1	1.07	82	High
8	P9. getting emotionally engaged	4.03	0.82	80.6	High
9	P1. reading slowly and carefully	4.03	0.88	80.6	High
10	P8. guessing meaning of unknown words	4.02	0.89	80.4	High
11	G8. using context clues	3.97	0.8	79.4	High
12	P6. adjusting reading rate	3.92	1.06	78.4	High
13	P3. visualizing information	3.92	1.11	78.4	High
14	G6. determining what to read closely	3.9	1.2	78	High
15	G3. previewing poetry before reading	3.78	1.18	75.6	High
16	S4. paraphrasing	3.75	1.11	75	High
17	G10. checking understanding	3.73	0.99	74.6	High
18	G9. analysing and evaluating	3.67	1.1	73.4	High
19	S5. finding relationship among poetry ideas	3.62	1.04	72.4	High
20	G1. setting purpose for poetry reading	3.57	1.33	71.4	High
21	S8. thinking in both languages	3.55	1.24	71	High
22	S3. underlining	3.47	1.19	69.4	Medium
23	P5. pausing and thinking	3.43	1.21	68.6	Medium
24	G4. checking how content fits purpose	3.38	1.32	67.6	Medium
25	G5. noting poetry characteristics	3.22	1.06	64.4	Medium
26	S2. reading aloud	3.22	1.37	64.4	Medium
27	S7. translating from English to L1	3.08	1.24	61.6	Medium
28	S1. note taking	2.82	1.32	56.4	Medium
29	S6. asking oneself questions	2.80	1.20	56.0	Medium
30	G7. using text features	2.28	1.25	45.6	Low

4.2.2.1 Problem Solving Category

The first category discussed here is Problem Solving category which are ranked as the most used strategies among poetry readers as shown in Figure 4.2. Here the ranking of the strategies is based on the mean of each of them. Table 4.9 shows results of analysis of problem solving category consisting of 9 strategies.

Table 4.9: Response frequency for perceived problem solving strategies of poetry reading

Rank	Problem Solving Strategies	Mean	SD	%
1	23. re-reading	4.18	0.83	83.6
2	9. trying to stay focused	4.18	0.77	83.6
3	13. paying close attention	4.1	1.07	82
4	7. reading slowly and carefully	4.03	0.88	80.6
5	28. getting emotionally engaged	4.03	.82	80.6
6	25. guessing meaning of unknown words	4.02	0.89	80.4
7	18. visualizing information	3.92	1.11	78.4
8	11. adjusting reading rate	3.92	1.06	78.4
9	15. pausing and thinking	3.43	1.21	68.6

The results revealed by Table 4.8 clarifies clearly that item 23, re-reading, ($SD = .83$) and item 9, trying to get back on track, ($SD = .77$) both with the mean of 4.18 are the most frequent perceived problem solving strategies used and 83% of learners “sometimes”, “usually” or “always” use these strategies. Research like Li and Kaur (2014), Madhumathi and Ghosh (2012) and Fotovatian and Shokrpour (2007) also found the same result about re-reading as the highest frequent perceived problem solving strategy. This shows a contribution of the present research to new knowledge that is in line with the existing knowledge and shows that in poetry reading, readers tend to re-reading the same as reading other types of texts.

The next strategy among Problem Solving strategies is item 13 of SPRS, when the English poetry becomes difficult, I pay close attention to what I am reading, with the mean of 4.10 ($SD = 1.07$). This means that poetry readers prefer to fully understand the literary text rather than skipping the parts that they do not understand perfectly. It is not surprising that the next strategy is I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand the English poetry that I am reading (item 7) with mean of 4.03 ($SD = .88$). Item 28, I get emotionally engaged with the poetry, with the same mean of 4.03 ($SD = .82$) stands very close to item 7 which means that mostly, literature and poetry raise emotions and feelings of the readers. This indicates the aesthetic aspect in poetry reading that also shows the role of reader response approach in poetry reading since getting involved emotionally in reading is one aspect of this approach (Van, 2009). With a very slightly less mean (4.02, $SD = .89$) item 25, when I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases used in the English poetry, follows at the high ranked category in problem solving strategies. At the end of the list of highly ranked strategies in problem solving category are items 18, visualizing information, and 11, adjusting reading rate, both with the mean score of 3.92 and $SD = 1.11$ and 1.06 respectively. This means that poetry readers prefer to draw imaginary pictures in their mind to help them have a better understanding than drawing them on paper. This supports Rosenblatt's

idea of imaginary world or pictures that earlier in section 2 is explained thoroughly. Moreover, at the same time they change their reading rate on the basis of the difficulty in understanding the meanings.

The least employed strategy is pausing and thinking with the mean of 3.43 (SD = 1.21) and about 69% of the usage is a medium ranked strategy. Although this strategy is the last in the list of problem solving strategies, it is still categorized as the medium ranked means in total strategies, meaning that there is no low ranked mean strategy among problem solving strategies. This shows that generally problem solving strategies are among the top used strategies which is the same result of Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), Fotovatian and Shokrpour (2007), Poole (2010) and Madhumathi and Ghosh (2012). They also found re-reading as the highest ranked strategy use. And for both of them the ranking of most other strategies matches the order belonging to the present study as shown in Table 4.9.

4.2.2.1.1 Discussion

The results from the problem solving strategies reveal that strategies in this category are highly popular among the readers and they perceive that they use them more than other categories in their poetry reading. For them two strategies are equally about at the same importance before all the other strategies of this type. One is re-reading which shows that readers prefer to read repeatedly to thoroughly digest the message and make sure they understand the meanings. The other similar problem solving strategy is trying to stay focused. Obviously, readers try to stay focused and on track by reading repeatedly till they are satisfied with the meaning that they have constructed from the poetry. The next problem solving strategy, paying close attention, supports the other first strategies and shows that by paying close attention to the poetry, the students try to stay focused and understand the most out of the poetry lines. Presence of the next strategy, reading slowly and carefully, right after the other 3 strategies seems to suggest that for the postgraduate readers meaning making is more important than any other thing in reading poetry since they use any strategy and do anything just to get as much as they can and understand more.

By getting emotionally engaged, in the next rank seems that readers also try to make a balance between their thoughts and mind with their emotions in reading poetry. Since poetry is the condensed language of emotions and feelings, as well as profound insights, readers automatically get involved to the poetry by their feelings.

Next strategy, guessing meaning of unknown words, closely following the previous efferent and aesthetic strategies in reading poetry is a critical strategy which shows readers do not miss to be critical and thoughtful about the ideas in the poetry. It is interesting that the mean of all these strategies is so much close to each other and even can be considered as one.

Visualizing information is the next problem solving strategy with the aesthetic stance to poetry reading. This strategy has also the same mean with the next efferent strategy, adjusting reading rate. Finally, pausing and thinking is the critical strategy

that again emphasises that for the postgraduate poetry readers it is crucial to be emotional as well as thoughtful and judgmental to understand as much as they can.

These strategies also indicate that the strategies which require a top-down interactive processing are much more popular among postgraduate poetry readers since they mainly deal with comprehension gathering and monitoring the information that they understand from the text. Moreover, these general strategies can help the readers to generate guesses and be productive.

4.2.2.2 Global Category

The second category discussed here is Global category consisting of 13 strategies. This section is reporting the statistics and the results based on the mean of strategies. Table 4.10 presents the findings of SPRS constituting respondents' perceived Global Strategies in rank order. The findings are presented based on the mean score, standard deviation, and the sum of the participants' answers for each item. In order to discuss the findings of the thirteen strategies representing global strategy fully, the perceived strategies' ranks are divided into three categories, the high, medium, and low. As mentioned earlier, as SORS and many other studies follow it, the high rank perceived strategies are those with the mean scores ranging from 3.50 to 5.00, the medium rank with mean scores ranging from 2.50 to 3.49, while the low rank with mean scores ranging from 0.01 to 2.49. The results illustrated that there are ten perceived strategies that can be considered highly ranked while only three of Global strategies are not highly used. The long list of highly used Global strategies is shown in Table 4.10 as below:

Table 4.10: Response frequency for perceived global strategies of poetry reading

Rank	Global Strategies	Mean	SD	%
1	30. making judgment and opinion	4.47	.57	89.4
2	29. getting information	4.33	.63	86.6
3	22. predicting poetry meaning	4.28	0.8	85.6
4	3. using prior knowledge	4.13	0.89	82.6
5	16. using context clues	3.97	0.8	79.4
6	12. determining what to read closely	3.9	1.2	78
7	4. previewing poetry before reading	3.78	1.18	75.6
8	21. checking understanding	3.73	0.99	74.6
9	19. analysing and evaluating	3.67	1.1	73.4
10	1. setting purpose for poetry reading	3.57	1.33	71.4
11	6. checking how content fits purpose	3.38	1.32	67.6
12	8. noting poetry characteristics	3.22	1.06	64.4
13	14. using text features	2.28	1.25	45.6

4.2.2.2.1 Discussion

The Global category includes item 30, making their own judgment and opinion on the poetry, and item 29, getting as much information as possible from the poetry, with the highest mean score of 4.47 (SD = .57) and 4.33 (SD = .50) respectively, followed by items 22 and 3 namely, predicting poetry meaning with the mean score of 4.28 (SD = .8) and using prior knowledge with the mean score of 4.13 (SD = .89). Since the first two

strategies are added to the original SORS, the first comparable strategy is predicting poetry meaning which Islam et al. (2015) and Anderson (2003) also found to be the most frequent perceived strategy.

Apart from the very four top strategies in the list of ten highly used Global strategies, there are six other strategies with the mean score above 3.5. In order, they are item 16, using context clues, with the mean score of 3.97 (SD = .8), item 12, determining what to read closely, with the mean score of 3.9 (SD = 1.2), item 4, previewing poetry before reading, with the mean score of 3.78 (SD = 1.18), item 21, checking understanding, with the mean score of 3.73 (SD = .99), item 19, analyzing and evaluating, with the mean score of 3.67 (SD = 1.1), and the last is item 1, setting purpose for poetry reading, with mean score of 3.57 (SD = 1.33). All these items are related to reader response theory which refers to reader as the main role in meaning making of the text. All these items are the efforts that the reader makes to understand the text better (Mokhtari and Reichard, 2002).

The next two items are categorised in the medium used strategies which means that their mean score is between 2.5 and 3.5. They are item 6, checking how content fits purpose, with the mean score of 3.38 (SD = 1.32) and item 8, noting poetry characteristics, with the mean score of 3.22 (SD = 1.06). Nevertheless, item 14, using text features (M = 2.28, SD = 1.25) like drawing tables, figures, or pictures to increase understanding of English poetry is the least frequently used global strategy among the readers. This is supported by the findings of Madhumathi and Ghosh (2012), Gence (2011), and Anderson (2003).

These results seem to suggest that the participants perceived that they have the tendency to be cognitively prepared before and while reading poetry. First, they seem to perceive that their own judgment and opinion on the poetry reading is of utmost importance, receiving the highest mean score of all the thirteen items in Global strategies. Second, they also think that gathering as much information as possible from the poetry is crucial as this strategy can basically assist them in their meaning making process of the verses in poetry. Third, they perceived that they also have the tendency to guess about the content when reading the poetry. This seems to suggest that when they read poetry, they actively and constantly try to predict the writer's intention through the content of the poetry. In other words, they are actively processing the poetry through the strategy of guessing.

Fourth, these participants perceived that they would try to remember back information that they already know about the poetry. This strategy seems to suggest that the participants would try to employ their schema in order to explicate and understand the meaning of the poetry they read. After that, there are six other perceived strategies that are considered belonging to the high rank. Ranked 5 is item 16, I use context clues to help me better understand the English poetry I am reading. This is closely followed by item 12, When reading English poetry, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore suggesting that these readers tend to be selective in explicating the meaning within poetry. Ranked 7 is item 4, I take an overall view of the English poetry to see what it is about before reading it. This perceived strategies seems to indicate that

the readers put importance to their holistic idea about the poetry. Closely followed is item 21, I check my understanding when I come across new information in the English poetry which falls in rank 8. This perceived strategies points to the importance of constant understanding of the content, regardless of old or new information, without the readers losing tract while reading poetry. Ranked 9 is item 19, I critically analyse and evaluate the information presented in the English poetry, indicating that critical analysis and evaluation of the content read are very central to the overall understanding of the meaning of poetry. Next perceived global strategy which is in rank 10 is item 1 in SPRS, I have a purpose in mind when I read English poetry.

Next two strategies are categorized in medium ranked group of global strategies. They are item 6, I think about whether the content of the English poetry fits my reading purpose, and 8, I review the English poetry first by noting its characteristics like length and organization, in SPRS respectively. Strategies in this range show that it is moderately important for poetry readers to see that their set purpose of reading the poems matches with the content of the verses in total and it also shows that poetry readers relatively like to scan the form of the poem before going to its function. The last global strategy belonging to the low ranked mean group is item 14 in SPRS, I draw tables, figures, or pictures to increase my understanding of the English poetry or simply using text features. This shows that poetry readers do not show that much interest to draw any figurative or pictorial designs while reading poetry for their better understanding.

4.3.2.3 Support Category

Table 4.11 shows the results of analysis of Support strategies ranking them as the last category of strategies that readers perceive to use on the basis of the mean of the strategies. In Table 4.11, there are eight strategies belonging to this category.

Table 4.11: Response frequency for perceived support strategies of poetry reading

Rank	Support Strategies	Mean	SD	%
1	17. paraphrasing	3.75	1.11	75
2	20. finding relationship among poetry ideas	3.62	1.04	72.4
3	27. thinking in both languages	3.55	1.24	71
4	10. underlining	3.47	1.19	69.4
5	5. reading aloud	3.22	1.37	64.4
6	26. translating from English to L1	3.08	1.24	61.6
7	2. note taking	2.82	1.32	56.4
8	24. asking oneself questions	2.8	1.2	56

4.2.2.3.1 Discussion

As presented in Table 4.11 about the support category, it is not surprising to find paraphrasing as the most frequent perceived strategy with the mean of 3.75 (SD = 1.11) used by majority of the Iranian poetry readers (75%) since they prefer to convert the poetic language to a simplified more understandable language. Very closely standing in the second rank in this category is item 20, finding relationship among poetry ideas, with the mean score of 3.62 (SD = 1.04). This is in line with the previous strategy as it

shows the same thing that the Iranian readers are interested to get to know the meaning of the literary text they read in English, therefore they use any strategy to achieve the goal of understanding in either another language or their mother tongue; that is why the very exact next highly used strategy is item 27, thinking in both languages, when they read English poetry. The mean of this strategy is 3.55 (SD = 1.24) which is in the category of high ranked strategies. Therefore there are three highly ranked strategies among the total 8 support strategies and all the next are considered as the medium ranked ones on the basis of their mean range.

The first medium range strategy that is perceived by the students is item 10, underlining, with the mean of 3.47 (SD = 1.19). As it shows this strategy also helps Iranian poetry readers to understand the meaning of the text. Until now we see that the readers prefer to understand the meanings rather than simply read it for fun. Next support strategy is when the English poetry becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read (item 5) with a mean score so close to the previous one which is 3.22 (sd = 1.37). This strategy also like the previous strategies of the list emphasises on the importance of meaning making and understanding on poetry reading for Iranian readers. As Van (2009) explains reading poems aloud in literature classes is a reader-response approach in poetry reading and teaching. Item 26, translating from English to L1, with the mean of 3.08 (SD = 1.24) also speaks the same message of getting the meaning of poetry with the help of translation into the mother tongue so that the flow of understanding is more fluently streamed in the mind of the readers.

Next, comes item 2, note taking, and 24, asking oneself questions. These two strategies are the least frequently used strategy with the mean of 2.82 (SD = 1.32) and 2.80 (SD = 1.20), used by 56% of the readers. Anderson (2003) also found that note taking is the least used Support strategy. Moreover, according to Abidin and Riswanto (2012), asking oneself questions is also the least frequent used support category. The results of Support strategies seem to suggest that participants try to use strategies that help them build meanings. First, they perceived paraphrasing as their mostly used problem solving strategy. This strategy is a reader-centred strategy that show readers tend to deal with comprehension and understanding poetry.

The next two critical strategies of finding relationship among poetry ideas and thinking in both languages are also showing the interactive processing of top-down strategies. These are the strategies that the readers perceive as the highly used strategies in reading poetry. However, they perceive that the rest of the Support strategies including underlining, reading aloud, translating from English to L1, note taking, and asking oneself questions are not as helpful for them in reading poetry. As postgraduate students who are trained to be productive and active in meaning making, using such text-centred strategies which deals with visual recognition and decoding like writing and marking on the paper cannot be good options in constructing meanings. This means that the participants believe that mainly they use top-down strategies rather than bottom-up in reading poetry. This also shows that they are reader-centred than text-centred and relying on the text merely to understand the meanings.

The above discussions on the three categories of strategies show that the findings of this study are consistent with those of Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). The postgraduate Iranian students were capable of planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own readings by using helpful strategies to assist them read and understand poetry. Magogwe (2013) and Prichard (2014) also found the same results for their studies.

4.4 Discussion

This section discusses the findings of this research thoroughly in depth. This study provides evidence about poetry reading strategies accumulated through the quantitative method. As discussed earlier, the system in this section follows the order of research questions.

For the research question, the results from the Problem Solving strategies reveal that the readers perceive that they are the most frequent strategies in poetry reading. For the readers, re-reading and trying to stay focused are the most highly used strategies in poetry reading in readers' perception. This means that readers perceive that they tend to read few times to get the deep meanings without being distracted. The next supporting strategies of the first strategies are paying close attention, and reading slowly and carefully. This shows that the postgraduate readers perceive that they use strategies that keep them in track of meaning making more than the rest of Problem Solving strategies.

The next category which the readers perceive they use more in reading poetry is the Global category. The highly used global strategies are making judgment and opinion, getting as much information as possible, followed by predicting poetry meaning and using prior knowledge. This shows that postgraduate poetry readers like to think about the poetry and analyse the deep meanings to know more about the conveyed messages. The centrality of the role of the readers in this category can reflect the relevance to the underlying theory of this study, reader response theory. The results also show that the participants perceive that they prefer to get cognitively prepared before and during poetry reading and actively process and analyse the poetry by using Global strategies.

The last category of strategies used by poetry readers is the Support category. Paraphrasing is the most used perceived strategy by the Iranian poetry readers because they prefer to simplify the poetic language to a more understandable language. Moreover, finding relationship among poetry ideas is the next common perceived strategy. It is logical to have this strategy as the second highly perceived strategy since it shows the same thing that the EFL readers are interested to know the meaning of the poetry that they read in English. Therefore, they use any strategy to achieve understanding in any language. That is why the next highly used strategy is thinking in both languages, when they read English poetry.

Students' perception is that they use Problem Solving, Global, and then Support strategies in poetry reading. It is not far from expectation that since the participants are the postgraduate students, they are highly mind oriented and tend to holistic or top-

down strategies than local or bottom-up strategies. The reason of this difference in their perception with reality might be the fact that they may think that they use helping strategies in poetry reading when there is a difficulty in meaning making or understanding.

The difference is not only in the big categories of strategies but in the individual strategies as well. For example, students perceive making judgment and opinion as the most highly perceived strategy in poetry reading. The reason is not clear but the reason may be because the postgraduate students use to think about everything deeply and therefore they think that they act the same in reading poetry as well and they make their opinion and judgment in poetry reading as well as reading in general. The reason for using paraphrasing is also not investigated by this study but it can be because in Iran students study poetry by paraphrasing and reading a poem means to paraphrase it to get the meaning and therefore they use to read poetry by paraphrasing.

This section is a discussion of results for the research question of the study. The detailed analysis of the data from the Survey of Poetry Reading Strategy (SPRS) revealed the postgraduate Iranian poetry readers' perception. For these readers Global, Support, and Problem Solving strategies are of most usage respectively.

The other finding of the study is that the readers believe that they use making judgment and opinion, getting information, predicting poetry meaning, re-reading, trying to stay focused, using prior knowledge, paying close attention. getting emotionally engaged, reading slowly and carefully, guessing meaning of unknown words.

The result of the present study corresponds with many other researches such as Mokhtari and Reichard (2002). There are also some other research that show readers with higher level of proficiency use more Global or top-down strategies (Mokhtari and Sheorey, 2002), although they do not question the fact that Problem Solving strategies are so much helpful in reading. Only to be aware of the strategies does not guarantee their effective usage, but the readers have to be familiarized with their appropriate usage. As a result, practice can help to improve knowledge on reading strategies. In order to help readers to have a more efficient reading performance, they can be taught to use reading strategies.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study go in line with many other researches that show EFL readers tend to use reading strategies often in their reading (Chen and Chen, 2015). To this end, a population of sixty students were selected randomly among Iranian readers to complete a 30-item scale of the SPRS Questionnaire.

The findings from SPRS reveal that mainly Support strategies are among the least popular strategies that readers use in poetry reading. It means that the readers do not find basic support mechanisms as helpful as Global and Problem Solving strategies. Since many Global and Problem Solving strategies at the top of the list are among top-down strategies, it shows that for the readers in this study the top-down approach to

reading works better than bottom-up reading approach and they prefer to construct the meanings and be creative in understanding the poetries than caring about the physique or shape of the poems by underlining or taking notes, for instance. This suggests that the readers are not well-versed in employing various helpful strategies such as note-taking or underlining for better comprehension although they are aware of them and their perception is not using them often in their poetry reading. Therefore, it is advantageous to the Iranian readers if they do not underestimate the importance of such strategies to help them turn into more proficient English poetry readers and a part of this change is on teachers' shoulder to assist this group of English as a foreign language readers.

The above findings are another reason that show the Iranian readers tend to use top-down strategies more often in their poetry reading for better poetry understanding. It can be logical since as postgraduate students, they are mature and logical enough to find top-down strategies more helpful. Top-down strategies basically rely on the deep understanding of the texts and more proficient readers tend to employ them more often. A very good example is that some bottom-up strategies had been excluded from the list of strategies after the pilot study since the participants were not making use of them such as using reference materials like dictionaries. Instead of that, the readers used and also claimed that they use guessing the meaning of unknown words or using the context clues to understand and to make the meanings. In addition, the high rate of inferencing strategies supports the result that Iranian postgraduate students are proficient readers who are able to use such strategies frequently as well as the fact that they are aware that they use these strategies as their responses to SPRS.

5.1 Pedagogical Implications

This study shows that using reading strategy in reading English poetry is an effective way in understanding poetry of any type for Iranian users since they were able to interpret the texts and get the conveyed messages in the deep meaning. Based on the findings, Global strategies such as analysing and evaluating, predicting poetry meaning, making judgment and opinion, using context clues, and checking understanding are used more than other strategies. Followed by Global strategies are Support strategies in the second rank such as paraphrasing and finding relationship among poetry ideas. The third rank is finally for Problem Solving strategies such as re-reading and pausing and thinking. The reason of this order is not identified in this study but it is probable that for postgraduate students of this study as mind oriented individuals it is important to use holistic strategies to construct the meanings, after that support strategies as the second rank of importance help them to comprehend the text and finally readers use actions while reading to help them understand the poems.

In the general sense, the most useful strategies in reading poetry are paraphrasing, analysing and evaluating, re-reading, predicting poetry meaning, making judgment and opinion, using context clues, and pausing and thinking respectively, which help to get insights and deeper meanings. Thus, students have to be encouraged in employing more of these strategies to assist them understand poetries more

effectively. Teachers also need to make them aware of reading strategies and how to use them in reading texts particularly poetry. The reason is that still Iranian students do not have enough knowledge about reading strategies and do not know how to employ them for a better understanding.

In this study, I argue that it is better that students know useful strategies like Global and Support strategies in general. To do so teachers are recommended not to continue teaching poetry by using the conventional ways. Still today, students simply read poems without making advantage of the right strategy. They just read without knowing the strategies and if ever they use any strategy it is most probably unconscious or they have found it useful through time. However, based on the findings of this study, I suggest that it is more beneficial for the students if they learn about different strategies and check which one of them helps them more than other strategies. This study suggests that students can first check strategies such as paraphrasing, analysing and evaluating, re-reading, predicting poetry meaning, making judgment and opinion, using context clues, pausing and thinking before other strategies.

One of the effective ways of better understanding of poetry is making use of strategies in reading poetry with an appropriate stance toward reading poems (Ebrahimi & Zainal, 2014). Actually, this study suggests that using strategies widens the repertoire (Iser, 1978) of interpretive strategies that the students have developed for interacting with poetry as the text. As it was seen in this study, the readers were not used to read poetry based on their feelings and the aesthetic stance was not that important for them in making the poetry meanings. The Iranian participants in this study tend to use more efferent and critical stances which means these stances were more important for them to understand the deep meanings and messages of the lines rather than getting involved emotionally with the poetry.

As explained before most English literature teachers do not have a comprehensive knowledge about new methods of teaching literature especially poetry. As a result, they are not really willing to employ those new methods in their classes. One of these methods is reading the text with the help of reading strategies. An example of research supporting this idea is Annett (2008) who found that English teachers believe that they are so weak in the literature vocabulary and the history of the genre. Similarly, Ebrahimi (2013) and Ebrahimi and Jiar (2018) reported that not many English teachers are interested to improve their literary language capabilities, or to learn useful literary concepts. Today's Iranian teachers are also not an exception. Being aware of this fact, for literature classes some new and easy ways of teaching and learnings have to be proposed. These new ways have to be simple so that both students and teachers get interested in using them to construct meanings of literary texts. Achieving such a goal needs a multi-departmental collaboration, for example departments related to the fields of languages, literature, linguistics, teaching, and education, to help students and literature teachers to be familiar with useful reading strategies such as paraphrasing, analysing and evaluating, re-reading, predicting poetry meaning, making judgment and opinion, using context clues, pausing and thinking and therefore to use new theoretical methods of reading poetry. The first step in this regard

is knowing the useful strategies before everything and then trying to employ them in reading poems of different types.

This study merits some implications both for students and teachers. By developing their knowledge about the process of poetry reading, Iranian students and teachers might change their attitude to reading. Therefore, they can choose the most suitable strategies such as Global and Support strategies that can be taught in their classrooms especially literature classes.

Familiarizing Iranian students to reading strategies assists them in a more effective reading and understanding of poetry. In this study, poetry reading strategy use gave them the chance to think if their perception about poetry reading process was right or they had a different experience reading poetry in practice. Making a comparison between their perception with their actual strategy usage makes them more aware of the process of reading and understanding of poetry. In this research, by developing poetry reading strategies, Iranian students were encouraged to think and choose the most suitable strategies that they thought works best for them to their repertoires as they understood that there were other ways to read texts. This can help in Iranian students' independency to teachers as the authority of the class who would dictate one meaning for the poetry lines for instance. In other words, it facilitates Iranian learners' autonomy in reading English poetry and consequently in other subjects and finally in life.

Additionally, Reader Response and Transactional theories emphasizing on the readers' roles as the main focus for the reading process to occur and this leads to a more effective reading. All these points are also supported in this study. Following Rosenblatt's theories, Iranian EFL readers of this study found it enjoyable and easy to do the poetry reading sessions without the interference of the teacher. Interestingly, they were confident to use many strategies in their poetry reading practice such as paraphrasing, analysing and evaluating, re-reading, predicting poetry meaning, making judgment and opinion, using context clues, pausing and thinking as the most used strategies. In addition, they were pleased to take parts in such a different poetry reading session when they could freely construct their own version of meanings and interpretations without pressure of being judged by the authoritative power of the teacher. Their experience made the participants had different perspectives comparing to each other on reading poetry freely with no stress.

Therefore, the findings of this study can assist the students in getting more insights in English poetry reading and understanding. Iranian students who increase their knowledge in reading strategies such as Global and Support strategies can enjoy a more effective English poetry reading since they are top-down strategies that more proficient readers usually use. That is by using useful reading strategies, readers can understand poetry in a better way. The findings can further assist the students get more insights in the process of poetry reading that they usually prefer to use. Thus, they will be more aware of the new helpful strategies in English poetry reading, no matter what type of poetry they are.

5.2 Contributions of This Study

The purpose of this research was to fill the gap in the literature linking theories and practice in English poetry reading strategy use by Iranian postgraduate students. The findings and results from the quantitative method that is employed in this study support each other and can be shown in the schematic diagrams below in Figure 5.1.

Based on findings of this study a model is developed as shown in Figure 5.1 as the main categories of strategies in poetry reading. As Figure 5.1 shows, this study identified the main strategies in reading poetry as predicting poetry meaning, re-reading, and making judgment and opinion.

On the other hand in case of perceived strategies, participants believed that they use many strategies although it was not true in reality. However, the participants perceived some strategies such as getting information, trying to stay focused, using prior knowledge, paying close attention, and getting emotionally engaged as most helpful strategies in poetry reading than the above mentioned actual main strategies.

The model proposed in this study shows the order of categories of strategies in reading poetry as it is shown in Figure 5.1:

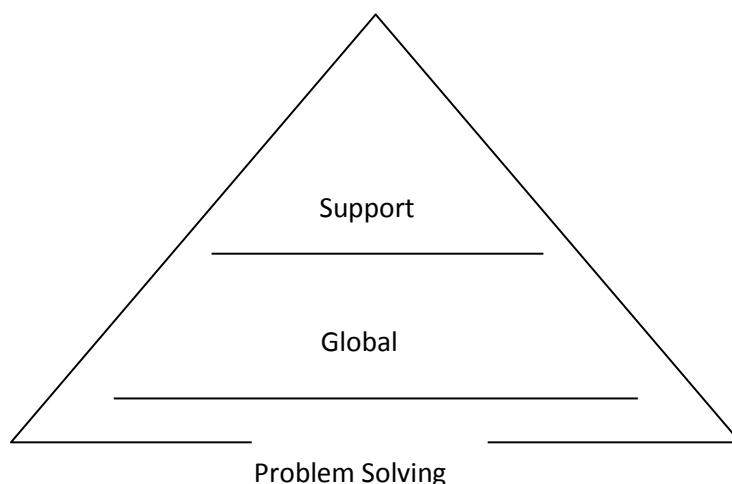


Figure 5.1: Model of perceived poetry reading categories of strategies by Iranian readers

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Considering the findings and results of this study, some out of many points that are worthy to consider in doing the related future research can be as follows:

Reading English poetry is difficult for both Iranian students and teachers; since poetry lacks in many Iranian syllabus, there are not many opportunities for the students to read poetry, therefore because they are not practiced enough in reading poetry they tend to miss the reading of poetry. It is our duty as literature teachers to facilitate poetry reading for them in an easier way.

The findings of SPRS exhibit that some Support strategies have generally the least usage of reading strategies in reading poetry. It means that for the readers basic support mechanisms are not that much helpful that they find other strategies. As a result, Iranian teachers are highly recommended to introduce Global strategies such as

analysing and evaluating, predicting poetry meaning, and making judgment and opinion and Problem Solving strategies such as re-reading, pausing and thinking, reading slowly and carefully, and paying close attention to students and ask them to try to employ them in their poetry reading more since in both the questionnaire Support strategies turned out to be the least popular strategies in poetry reading by Iranian postgraduate students. In other words, it is beneficial if teachers share their experiences using new methods like to use helpful reading strategies such as Global and Problem Solving strategies in their classes. Many teachers and researchers can introduce strategies that they find helpful to students and other teachers to learn and practice them.

One point is that since this study was done in Malaysia as a country where English is practiced as a Second language with Iranian postgraduate students studying in this country for whom English is a Foreign language, it cannot be totally definite to claim that the findings of this study can be generalizable to ESL readers or even Iranian readers of other contexts. Other studies can also consider those who are in the Iranian context rather than those who are living in an ESL environment. Although, I did this research on Iranian students who study abroad for their TESL postgraduate program, more of this type of research is needed to be conducted on various age group of students of other ethnic groups or even other languages than English in the future studies.

5.5 Conclusion

Findings of this study help students, teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers to design more appropriate programs for students. The ultimate goal for this study is to present suggestions to EFL/ESL students and teachers to understand that in the process of reading, students have to explore poetry reading strategies, experiment them, evaluate them and then choose their own effective strategies that suits their needs better. Iranian students can evaluate their own reading processes and be confident readers and become responsible for their own understanding and become autonomous learners if teachers can help them to create a cooperative learning environment with a lot of opportunities in using reading strategies in reading poetry.

In conclusion, in case of perceived strategies from SPRS, Iranian students believe that they use many strategies in reading poetry. They perceived some strategies as the most helpful strategies in poetry reading such as making judgment and opinion, getting information, predicting poetry meaning, re-reading, trying to stay focused, using prior knowledge, paying close attention, getting emotionally engaged, reading slowly and carefully, guessing meaning of unknown words. On the other hand, they perceive some strategies as the least helpful strategies in poetry reading namely, using text features, asking oneself questions, note taking, and translating from English to L1. Findings of this study help students, teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers to use and design more appropriate programs for students.

Acknowledgment

Dr Shirin Shafiei Ebrahimi is a Researcher of Universiti Teknologi Malaysia under the Post-Doctoral Fellowship Scheme.

References

1. Abidin, M. J. Z., & Riswanto (2012). The use of comprehension strategies in reading academic texts among the students of state college for Islamic studies (stain) Bengkulu, Indonesia. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(1), 254-261.
2. Ahmad, S. M. S. (2015). Metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among French language students: is there a different between genders? *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 8(2), 13-28.
3. Ahmadi, M. R., & Gilakjani, A. P. (2012). Reciprocal teaching strategies and their impacts on English reading comprehension. *Theory and Practice in language studies*, 2(10), 2053-2060.
4. Alhaqbani, A., & Riazi, M. (2012). Metacognitive awareness of reading strategy use in Arabic as a second language. *Reading in a foreign language*, 24(2), 231-251.
5. Anderson, N. J. (2003). Scrolling, clicking, and reading English: Online reading strategies in a second/foreign language. *The Reading Matrix*, 3 (3), 1-33.
6. Annett, D. (2008). Implementing graphic texts into the language arts classroom. *Minnesota English Journal*, 44(1), 150-179.
7. Bang, H.-J., & Zhao, C. G. (2007). Reading strategies used by advanced Korean and Chinese ESL graduate students: A case study. *The Reading Matrix*, 7(1), 30-50.
8. Bernhardt, E. (2005). Progress and procrastination in second language reading. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 25, 133-150.
9. Block, E. L. (1986). The comprehension strategies of second language readers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(3), 463-494.
10. Carrell, P. L., Gajdusek, L., & Wise, T. (1998). Metacognition and EFL/ESL reading. *Instructional Science*, 26(1-2), 97-112.
11. Chen, K. T. C., & Chen, S. C. L. (2015). The Use of EFL Reading Strategies among High School Students in Taiwan. *The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*, 15(2), 156-166.
12. Ebrahimi, S. S. (2011). A Comparison of Different Reading Strategies While Reading Modern vs Shakespearian Poems. *IPEDR, IACSIT Press*, 20, 324-327.
13. Ebrahimi, S. S. (2012a). Reading Strategies of Iranian Postgraduate English Students Living at ESL Context in the First and Second Language. *IPEDR, IACSIT Press*, 30, 195-199.
14. Ebrahimi, S. S. (2012b). A Comparison of Different Reading Strategies in Reading Poems by EFL Readers. *IPEDR, IACSIT Press*, 33, 99-104.

15. Ebrahimi, S. S. (2016). Effect of Digital Reading on Comprehension of English Prose Texts in EFL/ESL Contexts, *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, 5(2), 111-117.
16. Ebrahimi, S. S. (2013). Teaching English by Video Technology, *New Literacies: Reconstructing Education and Language* (pp: 310- 317). Chapter XXI, In Ambigapathy Pandian, et. al. (Eds), Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars
17. Ebrahimi, S. S. & Jiar, Y. K. (2018). The Use of Technology at Malaysian Public High Schools, *Merit Research Journal of Education and Review*. 6(3), 54-60.
18. Ebrahimi, S. S., & Zainal, Z. (2017). Perceptions on Poetry Reading Strategies by English as a Foreign Language Learners, *ASIA International Multidisciplinary Conference*. 10.
19. Ebrahimi, S. S., & Zainal, Z. (2016). Survey of Poetry Reading Strategy as the Modern Tool to Identify Poetry Reading Strategies, *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(19), 95-106.
20. Ebrahimi, S. S., & Zainal, Z. (2015). Common Strategies among EFL Students Reading Literature. *LSP International Journal*, 2(1), 31-36.
21. Ebrahimi, S. S., & Zainal, Z. (2014). English Poetry Stances By English As A Foreign Language Readers (pp: 116 – 131). In Lokman Mohd Tahir, et. al. (Eds), *IEPS2014 International Education Postgraduate Seminar 2014, Proceedings: Innovation, Issues and Challenges for Educational Sustainability, Volume II*, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
22. Fay, K., & Whaley, S. (2004). *Becoming one community: Reading and writing with English language learners*. Portland: Stenhouse Publishers.
23. Fotovatian, S., & Shokrpour, N. (2007). Comparison of the Efficiency of Reading Comprehension Strategies on Iranian University Students' Comprehension. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 37(2), 47-63. Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.
24. Genc, H. (2011). Paper and screen: Reading strategies used by low--proficient EFL learners. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 8(10), 648-658.
25. Hạng, L. T. B. (2014). Using metacognitive strategies to develop reading comprehension ability for English major students at college of foreign languages, danang university. *Tạp chí Khoa học Đại học Huế*, 88(10).
26. Hasan, S. W. (2015). The effect of teaching reading comprehension strategies on Iraqi EFL college students' performance in reading comprehension. *مجلة جامعة بابل العلوم الانسانية*
27. He, T-h. (2008). Reading for different goals: The interplay of EFL college students' multiple goals, reading strategy use, and reading comprehension. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 31(2), 224-242.
28. Iser, W. (1978). *The act of reading: a theory of aesthetic response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
29. Islam, M. S., Rahman, M. S., & Haque, E. (2015). Exploring awareness of online reading strategies used by EFL learners in a developing country: A study on

- undergraduate students in Bangladesh. *International Journal on E-Learning*, 14(1), 29-54.
30. Karbalaei, A. (2010). A comparison of the metacognitive reading strategies used by EFL and ESL readers. *The Reading Matrix*, 10(2), 165-180.
 31. Kim, N.H., & Jung, M.A. (2007). Reading Proficiency and Metacognitive Reading Strategies of L2 Readers. Paper presented in 2007 INTESOL. Indianapolis.
 32. Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language learning: Crosslinguistic constraints on second language reading development. *Language learning*, 57(s1), 1-44.
 33. Li, L., & Kaur, S. (2014). Textbook reading strategies and its relationship to reading test performance. *GEMA; Online Journal of Language Studies*, 14(3), 1-18.
 34. Madhumathi, P., & Ghosh, A. (2012). Awareness of reading strategy use of Indian ESL students and the relationship with reading comprehension achievement. *English Language Teaching*, 5(12), 131-140.
 35. Magogwe, J. M. (2013). Metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of University of Botswana English as Second Language students of different academic reading proficiencies: original research. *Reading & Writing-Journal of the Reading Association of South Africa*, 4(1), 1-8.
 36. Mokhtari, K., Reichard, C. (2002). Assessing students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 94(2), 249-259.
 37. Mokhtari, K., & Reichard, C. (2004). Investigating the strategic reading processes of first and second language readers in two different cultural contexts. *System*, 32, 279-294.
 38. Mokhtari, K., & Sheorey, R. (2002). Measuring ESL students' awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 25(3), 2-10.
 39. Mokhtari, K., & Sheorey, R. (2008). Reading strategies of first- and second-language learners: See how they read. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
 40. Oxford, R. (1996). Why is cultural important for language learning strategies? In Oxford R. (Ed), *Language learning strategies around the world: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. ix-xv). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.
 41. Park, J. (2015). Insights into Korean EFL Students' Reading Motivation, Proficiency, and Strategy Use. *English Teaching*, 70 (1), 57-74.
 42. Poole, A. (2010). The reading strategies used by male and female English language learners: A study of Colombian high school students. *New England Reading Association Journal*, 46(1), 55-63.
 43. Prichard, C. (2014). Reading Strategy Use of Low-and High-Proficiency Learners and the Effect of Reading Instruction. *大学教育研究紀要*, 10, 115-122.
 44. Rosenblatt, L. M. (2005). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In L. Rosenblatt (Ed.), *Making meaning with texts* (pp. 1-37). Portsmouth: Heinemann.
 45. Sadeghi, E., & Zarei, G. R. (2013). Investigating the use of compliments in Persian and English: A case study of Iranian EFL students. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies*, 2(2), 30-49.

46. Sheorey, R., & Baoczcy, E.S. (2007). Metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among Hungarian college students (pp.161-173). In K. Mokhtari & R. Sheorey (Eds), *Reading strategies of first- and second language learners: see how they read*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
47. Sheorey, R., & Mokhtari, K. (2001). Differences in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among native and non-native readers. *System*, 29, 431-449.
48. Sheorey, R., & Mokhtari, K. (2008). Differing perceptions of reading strategy use between native and non-native college students. *Reading strategies of first-and second-language learners: See how they read*, 131-141.
49. Sheorey, R., Kamimura, Y., & Freiermuth, M. (2008). Reading strategies of users of English as a library language: The case of Japanese ESP students. *Reading strategies of first-and second-language learners*, 175-184.
50. Taki, S. (2015). Metacognitive online reading strategy use: Readers' perceptions in L1 and L2. *Journal of Research in Reading*. 1-19.
51. Thao, V. T., Mai, L. H., & Ngoc, L. T. B. (2014). An Inquiry into Students' Application of Metacognitive Strategies in Reading Technical Materials. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(6), 1283-1291.
52. Van, T. T. M. (2009). The Relevance of Literary Analysis to Teaching Literature in the EFL Classroom. In *English Teaching Forum* (Vol. 47, No. 3, p. 2). US Department of State. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of English Language Programs, SA-5, 2200 C Street NW 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20037.
53. Wu, C. P. (2005). An investigation of metacognitive reading strategies used by EFL Taiwanese college students to comprehend familiar versus unfamiliar Chinese and English texts. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. UMI Number: 3196084. DAI Number: A 66/11. University of Idaho.
54. Zhang, L. J. (2008). Constructivist pedagogy in strategic reading instruction: exploring pathways to learner development in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom. *Instructional Science*, 36(2), 89–116.

Appendix

A. Survey of Poetry Reading Strategies (Sprs)

Participant's Background:

Male Female Age:

Program of study: Master PhD

How long is it that you study English?

Have you ever STUDIED English poetry?

Dear Participant;

Please kindly be informed that the purpose of this survey is to collect information about the various strategies you use when you read poetry in English. All the data will be kept confidential and only will be used for the purpose of this study. Accordingly, the researcher wishes you to provide her with as accurate responses as possible. Moreover, she greatly appreciates your cooperation in this study. The results will be announced publicly by the end of the study.

In the following questionnaire, you will find thirty strategies that you might use while you read poetry, each of which is followed by five scores, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, meaning as:

1 : I never or almost never do this.

2 : I do this only occasionally.

3 : I sometimes do this. (About 50% of the time.)

4 : I usually do this.

5 : I always or almost always do this.

Please, circle the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) which applies to you most, after reading each item. Please, note that there is no right or wrong response to any of the statements on this survey.

Statement	N e v e r	O c c a s i o n a l l y	S o m e t i m e s	U s u a l l y	A l w a y s
1. I have a purpose in mind when I read English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I take notes while reading English poetry to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I think about what I know to help me understand the poetry that I read.	1	2	3	4	5

Shirin Shafiei Ebrahimi, Yeo Kee Jiar
IRANIAN STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON POETRY READING STRATEGIES

4. I take an overall view of the English poetry to see what it is about before reading it.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I think about whether the content of the English poetry fits my reading purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand the English poetry that I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I review the English poetry first by noting its characteristics like length and organization.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration in reading English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I underline or circle information in the English poetry to help me remember it.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I adjust my English poetry reading speed according to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
12. When reading English poetry, I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	1	2	3	4	5
13. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I draw tables, figures, or pictures to increase my understanding of the English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I stop from time to time and think about the English poetry I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I use context clues to help me better understand the English poetry I am reading.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand the English poetry I read.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember the English poetry I read.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I critically analyse and evaluate the information presented in the English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I go back and forth in the English poetry to find relationships among ideas in it.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I check my understanding when I come across new information in the English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I try to guess what the content of the English poetry is about when I read.	1	2	3	4	5
23. When the English poetry becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
25. When I read, I guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases used in the English poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
26. When reading English poetry, I translate from English into my native language.	1	2	3	4	5
27. When reading English poetry, I think about information in both English and my mother tongue.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I get emotionally engaged with the poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I get as much information as possible from the poetry.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I make my own judgment and opinion on the poetry.	1	2	3	4	5

Creative Commons licensing terms

Authors will retain the copyright of their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Physical Education and Sport Science shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflict of interests, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated on the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](#).