

READING STRATEGIES AND STRATEGY AWARENESS IN THREE  
EFL EDUCATED READERS OF ENGLISH LITERARY TEXTS

Sed cum legebat, oculi ducebantur per paginas et cor intellectum rimabantur, vox autem  
et lingua quiescebant<sup>1</sup>

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This small-scale study of three educated readers aims to contribute to the exploration of the process of reading literary texts in a foreign language. By means of a think-aloud procedure and post-task interviews, the study explores the repertoire of strategies used by educated, non-native readers of literature and their progress in the use and awareness of those strategies after receiving academic instruction. Results evidenced the use of a great variety of cognitive, support and metacognitive strategies although, over time, some of them became less frequent or even disappeared. The study shows that repertoires of strategies change in time but also that each reader changes differently. The article draws pedagogical implications and provides recommendations for further research into the process of reading literature in a foreign language.

Key words: adult, language awareness, university, EFL, ESL, language learning, literary texts, metacognitive strategies, reading, reading strategies

## 1. Introduction

It is a common belief that literary texts in a foreign language are more difficult to understand than non-literary ones because of their levels of meaning and their apparent linguistic complexity. Some language researchers cast doubt on such a belief (Van Dijk 1977), but others point out (Zwaan 1993) that literary texts differ in the associations of ideas, the suspense and the emotions they awake in readers. Other applied linguists — and most literary theoreticians— have argued that such complexity is caused by the cultural load and the apparently higher degree of intertextuality inherent to literary texts (Pritchard 1990; Steffensen, Joag-Dev and Anderson 1979).

Probably because literature is perceived as such a special type of discourse with few connections with other academic and professional discourses, the activity of reading authentic literature in a foreign language has been scarcely researched. In fact, there is

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<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 B.C.) was showing surprise at the then 'odd' reading behaviour of an educated man reading silently.

no research that documents thoroughly what happens when educated adult EFL learners read an authentic literary text. One may find studies on the relationship between comprehension, strategies and metacognitive awareness of strategies, but always with regard to non-literary text (Block 1992; Carrell 1983, 1991, *et al.* 1988), or to the theoretical potential of literature for language acquisition (Hauptman 2000). As Maley (2001) points out, most scientific research on reading includes data collected from low-level ESP courses, and investigations into the reading of literature are usually parts of doctoral ethnographic studies that tend to remain unpublished.

The scarce studies on the actual process of reading literature neither explore the repertoire of strategies triggered by literature, nor describe the complexity of such a process; they rather document the use of individual strategies (Pritchard 1990; Riley 1993). Other studies exploring students' attitudes towards literature have only taken as participants native literature majors (Davis *et al.* 1992) or low-level ESL educated learners (Lao and Krashen 2000). None, with the exception of the case study reported by Trenchs (1997, 1998a, 1998b), has been devoted to L2 intermediate or advanced educated readers who may be approaching the comprehension of a literary text. A basis for the present investigation, the afore-mentioned case study, attempted to survey the reading strategies of such readers and to detect possible sources of comprehension difficulties. Its subjects relied on academic knowledge as a comprehension strategy and unconsciously reported on their use of metacognitive strategies, two behaviours worth the further exploration reported in the present article.

## **2. Scope of the study: Hypothesis and research questions**

This small-scale research aims to study the process of reading a literary text in a foreign language as experienced by university students of Humanities —thus, by educated readers— both at the onset of and after their academic instruction. The hypothesis underlying the research was that, after four years of instruction in the Humanities, advanced, educated L2 readers should change the way they approach the reading of a literary text in a foreign language as regards strategy use and strategy awareness.

The questions guiding the study were: (1) What repertoire of strategies do learners put to use when reading a literary text in a foreign language? (2) Do the use of and awareness of such strategies change after receiving academic instruction? (3) May different readers develop differently in their use and awareness of strategies after receiving such instruction?

## **3. Methodological design**

The existing studies exploring the strategies that learners put to use when reading in a foreign language recommend a qualitative methodological design including concurrent or retrospective verbal reports provided by the readers themselves (Block 1992; Davis and Bistodeau 1993; Ericsson and Simon 1996; Matsumoto 1993). Thus, two reading sessions were conducted with each participant: one at the onset of their university studies and another session once their degree in Humanities had been completed. Four methods of data collection were designed for each of the sessions: (1) the reading of a

literary text while doing a concurrent verbal report, (2) an oral summary of the text during a semi-structured post-task interview, (3) a retrospective oral report during the same interview and (4) the observation of the readers' external behaviour while reading.

Each participant was told to read the text aloud; they could stop at any point they wished and had to verbalize what they were understanding, what was going through their minds and what they thought they were doing while reading. The instruments in each session were two literary texts of similar length (1142 and 1385 words, respectively), of similar linguistic difficulty and of academic significance for the participants. The texts chosen were 'Cat in the Rain' (part of the students' course syllabus) for the first session and 'Mr and Mrs Elliot', for the second one; both short stories were written by Ernest Hemingway (1963 [1939]). In order to introduce the think-aloud procedure, the researcher exemplified it while performing a writing task so as not to bias the readers' reports (Victori 1995). They practiced the think-aloud procedure by reading parts of 'The Star' by Alasdair Gray (1984). The participants were audio-taped and, when possible, also video-taped to ensure data collection. An original extract from one of the think-aloud sessions may be found in Appendix A.

When readers had finished the think-aloud procedure, they retold the story in Catalan, their mother tongue, in order to document comprehension (Block 1992). A semi-structured post-task interview then ensued in which they were asked to say what they had understood and to comment on the task they had just performed. For illustrative purposes, an original extract from one of the interviews is included in Appendix B.

All think-aloud reports as well as the interviews were transcribed to facilitate the analysis of the data. The first step in the analysis was "to identify the verbalization units that correspond[ed] to units of heeded information" (Ericsson and Simon 1996: 258). The second step was to encode verbalizations and interview responses with categories describing reading strategies yielded by the data. The categories were based on the preliminary set of categories developed by Trenchs (1997, 1998a, 1998b).

The strategies finally found in the data are listed in Appendix C followed by data samples that exemplify what the participants were doing in the sessions. In some extracts the illustrated strategy is accompanied by other strategies. For the sake of readability, the original words in Catalan —the language in which the think-aloud sessions and the interviews were conducted— have been translated into English. Words originally read aloud from the literary text or uttered by the readers in English have been italicized to record the role of both languages in the reading process. All examples come from the think-aloud sessions except for interview excerpts in which the researcher's voice is present.

Occurrences of each category were counted; even though the focus of the present study is qualitative, a table with those counts is provided in Appendix D in order to illustrate the issues discussed in Section 5 below. Finally, the various data were contrasted and analyzed recursively to allow for reinterpretations and recoding.

Although this study focuses on only three L2 readers, the data which it yielded sufficed to uncover interesting phenomena, to explore the possibilities of the methodology employed and to prove the interest of a future larger-scale study. The participants' potential repertoire of L1 reading strategies was not taken into

consideration since, however interesting it may be, the contrast between L1 and L2 reading processes was not an objective in the present study.

#### 4. The participants

Maria, Montse and Sandra, three students of a Bachelor's degree in Humanities at a university in Barcelona, participated in this investigation. During the first data collection session, these three participants were starting a first-year core course on *English Language and Literature*. They had not taken any foreign literature courses before and the three of them had received the grade equivalent to a 'B' in either Spain's standardized university-entry English exam or an entry test administered by their School of Humanities. In the first classes within that course, these three volunteers had already demonstrated a good command of the language, successful interpretation skills and interest in the reading of literature. In their university studies none of them became Literature majors within the Humanities degree, but the three of them reported being regular readers of Catalan and Spanish literature.

#### 5. Results

##### 5.1. Repertoire of reading strategies

As expected, the repertoire of strategies put to use by the participants when reading the literary texts (see Appendix C) consisted of strategies which, individually, had already been reported in previous reading research on the reading of non-literary texts (Hosenfeld 1977; Block 1985; Carrell *et al.* 1988; Oxford 1990; Anderson 1991; Davis and Bistodeau 1993; O'Malley and Chamot, 1993). As Trenchs (1997, 1998a) had already reported, the cognitive strategies of evaluating and interpreting, which will be commented on in Sections 5.2 and 5.3, emerged again in the reading of both literary texts. No new strategies were put to use in either reading session.

In the second session there appeared the same kind of strategies as in the first one although, as will be seen below, the frequency of each of them varied with each reader. It must be remarked that there arose a great variety of cognitive, support and metacognitive strategies which included the use of external resources, the reliance on linguistic knowledge of various kinds, the recalling of personal experiences and the creative interpretation of the text and of its implicit information. Such a variety suggests the complexity of the process of reading itself, even in inexperienced foreign literature readers, as illustrated by the excerpt of a think-aloud session included in Appendix A.

Students' behaviours did not come as a surprise but, as will be seen in Sections 5.2 and 5.3, what was really interesting were the different ways in which in both sessions the participants put to use and combined those strategies differently to make meaning out of the texts.

*5.2. Differences in the readers' use and awareness of strategies after receiving academic instruction*

The analysis of the oral summaries of the texts and the concurrent verbal reports shows that the three readers were successful in understanding plots, characters and implicit information in both literary texts; they were also able to provide personal interpretations of the author's intentions. Their success, however, depended on different repertoires of strategies (in Appendix D, see the numbers of references to each strategy in the think-aloud protocols). Sandra, who in the interviews was highly aware of her own strategies, was also the reader who used the widest repertoire in both reading sessions, although like her classmates, she was not conscious of the full range of the strategies she had used during the task.

The strategy of 'rereading portions of the text aloud' decreased significantly in the second set of sessions, but still remained one of the most frequent. In the first session this strategy, together with the strategy of 'relating text to previous or subsequent excerpts' (i.e. 'going back and forth'), made recursive reading and the analysis of contextual clues possible. In her first reading session, Maria verbalizes such a recursive approach to the reading of the text:

Now s/he talks about the garden and s/he talks about people again, but not about the Americans, but about the Italians, before it has also been said that there were Italians in the hotel, [pause] I think, let's see. [pause, rereads silently] Ah, no, it is the first time that Italians are mentioned.

Rereading the text aloud was also used as a strategy to pause and think, to extract phonetic information from the words and to keep focused upon the task. 'Pausing in silence' was probably another strategy used to gain time to think and to reread; as Sandra said, "I think it is better for me to read longer excerpts and assess the information because otherwise I feel like I am contradicting myself from one sentence to another one".

Re-reading aloud and relating parts of the text appeared together with a significant 'reliance on the readers' morpho-syntactic knowledge', specially in Maria and Sandra, as the latter's think-aloud protocol illustrates:

Outside right under their window a cat was crouched crouched under one of the dripping green tables. Outside, outside right under their window, outside to the right under her window there was a cat that was, was crouched, crouched I don't know exactly what it is, under one of the dripping green tables. OK. Was crouched must be that it was lying or that was somehow, but it is a state because, otherwise, if it were an action, it would be was crouching, or something like this, since it is was crouched it must mean, must define the state the cat is in. Under one of the dripping green tables. OK. Green tables, under one of the dripping green tables tables. Dripping I don't know what it is but, well, it is an adjective of tables.

Another most frequent cognitive strategy in both sessions was the participants' 'adding of implicit information'. Regarding the use of this strategy, each participant

developed differently over time: one kept her use of it stable, another one increased its use and the third one decreased it drastically.

With regard to metacognitive strategies, data from all participants showed a decrease in their verbalization of 'assessment of text comprehension' but in the three cases there was an increase in verbalizations of 'monitoring the task of reading the text'. This may probably indicate that the three readers had become more self-confident and more conscious of the task itself. Their becoming strategically more aware correlates with research showing that strategic awareness and monitoring of comprehension are strategies shown by skilled readers.

One of the most significant changes was that, while in the first reading session all participants resorted to 'using background knowledge' in order to understand portions of text, this strategy almost disappeared in Montse's and Maria's second session. Sandra distinguished herself by increasing, in contrast, the quantity of references to background knowledge, which seemed to help her to understand the text:

Probably she [the female character] had it because it has also surprised me that, that, well, in Hemingway's time, in a text from that period of time, mmmm, so, in a time in which probably conventionalisms were kept strongly and formalisms and in which to be a virgin at the wedding was something that was taken more, more into consideration, that was more important. . . well, so, all this thinking about the social context and the believes then have, have surprised me in front of this explanation. That is why I had her in mind.

What was surprising was the fact that, after years of academic instruction in the Humanities, there was not any significant increase in 'references to academic knowledge' related to literature classes. In contrast, Montse only made two references in her second sessions and Maria's references decreased. A possible explanation is that readers disregard this kind of knowledge when they read outside the academic context, or that the use has been internalized and it is no longer retrievable in think-aloud sessions. Sandra, again, distinguished herself from her classmates by showing a development over time in the opposite direction.

With regard to 'support strategies', there was no significant reliance on them in either session although an increased awareness of underlining and of its functions were observed in the three readers. Their comments in the interviews on why they used such support strategies provide us informative hints about when readers resort to them: (1) to mark "something that looks important", (2) to summarize information about characters, (3) "to recall reading", (4) to keep track of textual organization, (5) to mark comprehension difficulties, (6) to mark something that "was surprising", and (7) to mark "a part of the text I like".

### *5.3. Development as readers of foreign literary texts*

The analysis of the data showed that the initial hypothesis of the study was correct, namely that, after years of instruction in the Humanities, advanced L2, educated readers would change the way they approached the reading of a literary text in a foreign language with regard to strategy use and strategy awareness. However, it was observed that, whenever changes in the use and awareness of strategies occurred, different

readers changed in different directions, as if academic instruction facilitated the development of their successful ‘personalities’ as ‘foreign literature readers’.

In the second reading session, Montse remained the reader with the smallest range of strategies. The decrease in assessment of comprehension and the increase in task monitoring suggest that she also seemed to become less worried about lack of comprehension but more conscious of her strategies while reading. Her higher linguistic proficiency and stronger self-confidence as an L2 reader was evidenced in her decrease in the conscious use of linguistic knowledge as a strategy. This lesser attention to linguistic details was accompanied by a more global approach to the text during the second session: she relied more often on the cognitive strategy of relating parts of the text and on summarising as a strategy of support. Her higher linguistic and textual self-confidence could also be evidenced by a lesser reliance on background knowledge.

Maria seemed to become less worried about her comprehension problems and more conscious of her strategies. Like Montse, her increased proficiency made her less dependent on the use of linguistic knowledge, as may be seen in a drop in her references to morpho-syntactic issues. She also decreased her reliance on background knowledge, on academic knowledge and on the adding of information, which had previously distinguished her personality as a reader. What was surprising was that, in contrast to Montse, Maria’s proficiency did not lead to a more global approach to the text. In contrast, there was a significant decrease in the cognitive strategy of relating parts of the text and no increase in summarizing as a support strategy.

Similar to her fellow students, Sandra became less worried about her lack of comprehension but remained aware of the reading strategies she could rely on. Surprisingly, her gain in reading ability—in fact, her decrease in the use of linguistic knowledge was by far the most marked—did not make her abandon her global approach to the text, as suggested by her increased awareness of textual organization. Departing from her fellow students’ tendencies, she showed a comparatively higher reliance on background knowledge. Her individual development as a reader was also seen in her increased—although still scarce—verbalization of academic knowledge as a useful strategy for evaluating the text.

## **6. Discussion**

Both Maria and Sandra, who showed fewer comprehension problems than Montse, frequently resorted to ‘analysis of textual organization’ as a strategy. Sandra even increased her frequency of use, a behaviour that Riley (1993) considers a strategy of good L2 learners and which became a necessary strategy when reading a story with flashbacks like ‘Mr. and Mrs. Elliot’. In fact, the three readers showed initial comprehension problems with this story, and Sandra and Maria perceived anaphoric and cataphoric analyses as a way to solve them. The three of them also elaborated ‘summaries’, a combination of strategies which, in Maria and Sandra, could be interpreted as a sign of a global approach to the text and of recursive reading. As reflected in their recurrent anaphoric analyses, their summarizing strategies and their retrospective comments, the three participants were observed to pay special attention to the beginnings of texts. Such a preoccupation correlates with Riley’s (1993) findings that

beginnings are better recalled than other parts of texts. Therefore, it seems likely that L2 readers will be able to perceive the special meanings that fiction writers attach to openings.

No participant made frequent use of support strategies in either reading session, and only Sandra's observed increase was of some significance. This scant reliance actually contradicts research into metacognition, which shows that L1 high reading ability students consider support strategies more valuable than low ability readers (Sheorey and Mokhtari 2001). According to those previous findings, if instructors wish their L2 students to approach the behaviours involved in L1 reading, it would follow that they should include the teaching of such strategies in the L2 classroom and make students more aware of the usefulness of such support. However, none of the participants in the present study seemed to rely on them significantly: this was the first contradiction between previous research and the data coming from participants who seemed to be successful in understanding literary texts.

Another similarity between Montse's and Maria's development points to a second contradiction, this time with regard to learners' use of their background knowledge. Research has shown that successful L2 readers use such knowledge to compensate for linguistic deficiencies (Steffensen *et al.* 1979; Carrell 1983). Davis *et al.* (1988, 1992) even propose that reliance on such knowledge is essential when reading literature. However, both Montse's and Maria's decrease in its use shows that some L2 readers may not need it as they become linguistically proficient. We could also see this change in behaviour as a sign that the instruction which they received may have somehow changed their approach to the text, since in their foreign language and literature classes students are instructed to support their interpretations on the basis of textual evidence. A similar effect of instruction could be hinted at by the fact that both Montse and Maria seemed to restrain themselves when evaluating the implicit information in the second text.

Finally, a third surprise emerged from Montse's and Maria's data, in this case as regards the explicit teaching of literary competence: while literature instructors believe that instruction does help in understanding and interpreting literature, the participants did not make frequent, explicit use of literature-related academic knowledge in the second session, and Maria even decreased such references. The fact that Sandra's changes in behaviour were different from those of the other two participants actually shows us that academic instruction may have different effects on different students. While in their second session Maria and Montse seemed to rely more globally on textual evidence, as emphasised by their instructors in the English language and literature classes, Sandra made more comments on the literary characteristics of the text and brought in her background knowledge and her previous knowledge about the author; she also dared to evaluate the text with more references to implicit information.

Despite these differences, other common changes over time were detected which allow us to glimpse some effect of the received instruction. First, although these readers did not rely frequently on support strategies in general, they all did slightly increase their use of underlining, a behaviour which could have been developed as a study habit at the university. Second, it does seem that these readers became more strategically aware, namely, more conscious of the reading task itself, since there was a clear increase—and a highly significant one in the case of Montse—in their task monitoring. Third, in the three participants there was a significant decrease in their re-reading the text



aloud. This change in behaviour may be attributed to their accumulated reading practice, but other more significant explanations can be provided: (a) the students may have become more self-confident as readers and feel less need to rely on recursive reading and on reanalysis of previous excerpts in order to go on with the task, (b) they may have become faster in processing the text and may need less time to think, (c) they may feel less need to rely on phonetic information provided by the reading aloud and (d) they could concentrate on the task and stay focused on it more easily.

All in all, strategic awareness, self-confidence as readers of a text in a foreign language, concentration on the task and the development of distinct personalities point to an increasing maturity of the three learners as readers, which is what we may expect from instruction at the university.

## **7. Conclusions and research implications**

The previously mentioned unexpected findings should make us rethink the instructor's role in L2 classes whose curriculum includes the reading of literary texts; in fact, the development of these three readers makes us reconsider some of the recommendations made in Trenchs reports of the case studies which served as the basis for the present investigation (1997, 1998a, 1998b). Thus, we may wonder whether instructors should really foster the use of support strategies, as well as the connections between literary texts and real-life experience, and whether literature instructors in L2 contexts should include metacognitive objectives in their curricula in order to make learners more conscious of the value of such knowledge. Further research into these issues is needed in order to discover whether literary texts may call for some reading strategies more often than others, or whether, considering the success of the three distinct 'reading personalities' with regard to text comprehension, there may exist more than one type of 'good L2 literature reader'.

The study opens several venues for further research since it could be enriched with a comparison of strategy use and strategy awareness when reading both literary and non-literary texts. If a large-scale study is to be undertaken following the methodology used here, reliability could be increased with other raters coding the data. A more detailed language test at the onset of the study could be added to ensure a more homogenous command of the L2 among all the participants. I would also recommend comprehension tests at the end of each session to gather more data on the degree of reading comprehension and to allow for a closer analysis of the improvement in L2 reading ability.

It has been mentioned that all participants resorted to analyzing textual organization. This raises the question of whether different story structures or plot configurations trigger different strategies, as Riley (1993) observed in relation to non-literary texts. Also, if some readers pay attention to author style (as the participants' comments on Hemingway evidenced), do different authors trigger different strategies? Hemingway's stories have been used as research instruments here, but one may wonder what happens when students read L2 poetry or drama.

Finally, although it has been seen how academic instruction may have similarly affected the participants' development as more mature readers, we have also observed

differences in their personalities as readers after the academic studies. Thus, a future, larger-scale qualitative case study including observation of the university classes attended by participants, documentation on their teachers' pedagogical approach towards L2 reading and collection of data from reading sessions at several points in time during their academic studies could throw more light on the specific role of instruction in the development of educated adults as L2 readers.

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### Appendix A: Sandra's second think-aloud procedure

[Reading aloud] Hubert Elliot was taking postgraduate work in law at Harvard when he was married. He was a poet with an income of nearly ten thousand dollars a year. He wrote very long poems, poems rapidly. He was twenty-five years old and had never gone to bed with a woman until he married Mrs Elliot... [thinking aloud] Ara aquí m'he quedat parada perquè, perquè no ho he entès del tot, perquè, bueno, ell ara ens està parlant, està anant una mica més enrere, i ens està parlant de Hubert Elliot, que suposo que és el, el Mr Elliot del qual ens està parlant des del principi. Ens diu que estava, estava estudiant, emm, un postgrau en, en, en lleis, bueno, en dret a Harvard when he was married. En aquest cas no sé exactament. . . Sí, when he was married, val, sí, estava dubtant si era que ho estava fent, que mentre ell estava casat, mentre el seu matrimoni, ell estava fent això, estava estudiant aquest postgrau, o si mentre estava fent aquest postgrau, es va casar, i aleshores, emm, que em quedo amb aquesta opció perquè diu when he was married i no while he was married. No sé si m'explico bé, emm, en certa manera el while seria un duratiu i, i en canvi, al posar el when el que m'està dient és que, és que lo duratiu és lo altre, el fer el postgrau: i en aquell temps, mentre feia el postgrau, when, es va casar. Emm, diu que era, diu que era un poeta emm, bueno, amb uns ingressos de prop de ten thousand dollars a year, deu mil dòlars l'any, que crec que, bueno, que deurien ser molts diners per l'època i pel que diu a continuació suposo que sí, perquè en certa manera és una justificació de lo anterior, diu He wrote very long poems rapidly. Emm, suposem efectivament que com que escrivia poemes molt llargs, molt ràpid, potser això li, lògicament això li permetia tenir una producció, doncs, emm, més elevada, i potser per això guanyava més diners. Em fa fixar que, que Hemingway, en el que és l'estructura, utilitza frases molt curtes i de sintaxi força simple i pocs, emm, enllaços, poques subordinades. Aquí, no utilitza per exemple un because o un since he wrote sinó que, bueno, posa frases l'una al costat de l'altra i és el lector qui, qui deriva d'aquesta connexió de les frases l'una amb l'altra, emm, doncs, els nexes subordinats. Abans en el paràgraf, quan parlava de l'edat i si semblava jove, si semblava més gran, també ha utilitzat aquest recurs o aquest, aquest mecanisme. He was twenty-five years old and had never gone to bed with a woman until he married Mrs Elliot. Val, aquí, ara explico perquè m'he quedat parada en aquest punt perquè diu que no havia, no s'havia anat, no havia estat al llit amb cap, amb cap dona als seus vint-i-cinc anys fins que es va casar amb la Mrs Elliot però jo recordava que, que quan ha fet l'explicació des del present fins endarrere ha dit que, que es va casar amb la Mrs Elliot després de fer l'amor amb ella durant, durant uns quants, unes quantes setmanes; llavors vull tornar per comprovar que és així o que ho he entès malament when Elliot had married her after several weeks of making love to her.

**Appendix B: First interview with Maria**

Researcher: Aquest és el dibuix que feies?

Maria: No acabava de situar l'acció. Vull dir el paisatge de l'hotel.

R: Quina part no situaves bé?

M: El bar, cita un bar però no hi passa res al bar, i el que tampoc no acabava de quedar clar és el gat, si està sota les taules al jardí, o si està sota les taules del bar.

R: Quin jardí?

M: El public garden. . . .

R: I les taules on són? On surt, on estan les taules?

M: Això és el que no acabo de veure. Relacionat amb les taules no entenia una paraula. Si aquí diu it was crouched . . . dripping no sé que vol dir green tables, suposo que les taules són del jardí. [rereads text] Primer ens descriu l'hotel la situació de l'hotel, el jardí.

R: I abans has dit aquesta frase no l'entenc però és descriptiva, quina frase era? Aquesta que has posat entre parèntesi?

M: Si, . . . in a long line in the rain.

R: Què descriu aquí?

M: M'imaginava que el mar trenqués contra la sorra de la platja, però line in the rain, però s'ho deu imaginar com [inaudible]

R: Aquí el que et costa és imaginar-t'ho, no és que no entenguis les paraules,

M: Això. Aleshores diu aquí és on ens torna a citar el cafè, ..doorway, doorway suposo que es la porta d'entrada, a waiter stood. . . .square, sembla com si el cambrer, com si el bar hagués de tenir un paper important a la història però no surt. M'ha despistat una mica.

R: Per això has tornat endarrera? . . .

R: Has dit això no vol dir mort.

M: Quan parlava de l'actitud o de l'aspecte del propietari.

R: Per què has dit deadly no vol dir mort?

M: She liked the deadly serious way, és com una mica despectiu, suposo que és la posse seriosa o tibada, bastant perquè els Italians no són gaire tibats.

R: O sigui el significat mort no t'hi lliga, i perquè no t'hi lliga?

M: Perquè ho trobo com a despectiu . . .

M: Quan al principi ha dit bowed, primer m'ha vingut al cap agenollar-se però--

R: No la sabies aquesta paraula?

M: Si, l'havia sentit dir.

R: Però en el primer moment no t'has recordat del que volia dir.

M: No, quan he vist bowed ho he relacionat amb agenollar-se però no és normal agenollar-se, per tant, he interpretat fer una reverència, per això m'ha semblat que devia ser una persona rica. . . .

M: Hi ha hagut com una evolució en la idea que tenia de la noia, primer me l'imaginava gran, . . . i d'això del bowed, me l'imaginava, important, i tibada, rica, i després em diu que és jove, i després bastant capriciosa, ella està bastant agobiada, farta de què l'ignorin. . . . M'ho imagino, quan llegeixo m'ho imagino, m'ho monto, relaciono amb llocs on he estat jo, quan llegeixo se'm forma com una imatge.

R: Això ho relaciones també amb un lloc on has estat tu? A Itàlia?

M: Un racó del nord d'Itàlia, no hi vaig ser però hi vam passejar. . . . Més o menys amb l'estructura aquesta, un hotel gran, maco, amb un jardí, després, en aquest cas hi ha havia una carretera, un passeig, el passeig marítim.

## Appendix C: Repertoire of reading strategies

### I. METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES

#### I.a Assessing comprehension

MONTSE: *Water stood in pools on the gravel paths.* Mmmm, water, mmm, was, mmm, *pools, pools*, I don't know what it means, it's like, *pool*, as if it were in, in, doing pools, on those paths, *gravel*, I don't know what it means.

#### I.b Monitoring the task

MONTSE: *Across the square in the doorway of the cafe a waiter stood looking out at the empty square.* This, I read it again, this sentence, [pause] that is, across the square, on the way out of the café, a waiter was looking out.

### II. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: INTERRUPTING AND MODIFYING THE TASK FLOW

#### II.a Pausing in silence

MARIA: *There were big palms and green benches in the public garden. In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea.* Now s/he talks about the garden and s/he talks about people again, but not about the Americans, but about the Italians, before it has also been said that there were Italians in the hotel, [pause] I think, let's see. [pause, rereads silently] Ah, no, it is the first time that Italians are mentioned.

#### II.b Rereading portions of text aloud without adding any comments

MONTSE: *She had seemed much younger, in fact she had seemed, she had seemed not to have any age at all, when Elliot had married her after several, several weeks of making love to . . . .* I read these last lines again, mmm, *when Elliot*, let's see, *She had seemed much younger, in fact she had seemed not to have any age at all, when Elliot had married her after several weeks of making love to . . . .*

**II.c Relating text to previous or subsequent excerpts (going back and forth within the text)**

MONTSE: But, well, the thing is that she has not been able to get pregnant, the Mrs Elliot, and now I go back and see if I can understand that sentence that I have not been able to understand in the middle of the text, let's see if I find it. Mmmm, I'm looking for the sentence which before I said that I would try to go back to it later in case I understand it later.

**III. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: USING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE**

RESEARCHER: And this, do you relate it to a place where you have been to?

MARIA: Yes.

R: In Italy?

**M: Yes.**

R: A hotel like this?

M: A place at the north of Italy, we didn't stay there but we had a walk there. . . . More or less, a structure like this one, a big beautiful hotel, with a garden, then, in this case, there was a road, an avenue . . .

**IV. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: USING LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE**

**IV.a Using morpho-syntactic knowledge**

MARIA: *Bueno, Mr and Mrs Elliot. Mr and Mrs Elliot tried very hard to have a baby.* OK, by now, we have two subjects, don't we?

**IV.b Distinguishing between different languages (in this case English and Italian, since the literary text included Italian words and some of the characters were supposed to be native Italian speakers)**

MONTSE: *When she talked in English, the maid's face tightened.* Of course, she spoke English, because she was American and then the maid's face *tightened*, I don't know what it means, but I suppose it is, I don't know, maybe the maid spoke Italian, maybe she did not understand much when she spoke English.

#### IV.c Making analogies with other L2 words

MONTSE: *This set, this set his heart to pounding.* Well, this image, either I don't know exactly, her heart, *to pounding*, that I don't know what it means, *pound, pound* are pounds [currency] but not here.

#### IV.d Using knowledge about word formation

SANDRA: Well, that George goes on reading *she went over and sat in front of the mirror* that she sat down in front of the mirror *of the dressing-table* at the table of, the dressing table, *looking at herself in the handglass* with the [masculine article], with the [feminine article] *in the handglass, glass* it is glass, it is cup, *with the handglass*, that is, with the cup in her hand I think.

#### IV.e Using knowledge about typographical conventions

MARIA: *The maid stayed outside to close the umbrella. as the American girl passed the office, the padrone, padrone,* it must be Italian, besides it is in italics, *padrone* must be the hotel keeper.

#### IV.f Looking for similarities with L1

SANDRA: *She studied her profile. First on one side and then the other. Profile* I didn't know what it was, but now I see it is profile, first because it is similar phonetically and then because first *one side and then the other* first one side and then the other one, it is the profile.

#### IV.g Using knowledge about punctuation

MARIA: "*I'm going down and get that kitty*", *the American wife said.* That is, now appears a thought, it is in quotation marks, it means, let's see, I go down and I'll take the *kitty, kitty* I suppose it is the cat.

#### IV.h Analyzing textual organization and text type

MARIA: *It was possible to try to have a baby but Cornelia could not attempt it very often although they wanted a baby more than anything else in the world.* Well, and now it looks like we go back to the point of, the beginning of the text, don't we? That is, he has started the text at a point, has introduced the characters, has gone back to introduce the personality and the, let's say, what the marriage was like.



**V. COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: EVALUATING AND INTERPRETING****V.a Evaluating and adding implicit information (whether correct or wrong)**

MONTSE: *I wanted that poor kitty.* She would like to have this *poor cat*, I suppose that maybe it inspired pity in her.

**V.b Evaluating with reference to academic literary knowledge (i.e. referring to author's style, figurative language, characterization, setting, point of view, irony or author's intention)**

SANDRA: Again Hemingway uses his mechanism of concatenating short sentences, one with the other and indirectly, almost without wanting, mmmm, we drift [or 'derive'; the meaning is not clear], so what we were saying, subordinate links and causal relationships.

Or

MARIA: The dialogue ends again and there is again an omniscient narrator.

**VI. SUPPORT STRATEGIES (using verbal, visual or physical resources)****VI.a Resourcing (i.e. using external reference materials)**

SANDRA: *In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel.* In the good weather, when the weather was good, there was always an artist with his *easel easel* I don't know what it means, I underline it because maybe it could be one [word] that I would look up in the dictionary. But not yet, I will go on and see if something can tell me, can tell me what it means and otherwise I would look it up. Maybe it is a typical thing of the artist, or some tool.

**VI.b Underlining**

RESEARCHER: What were you underlining, were you marking things? . . .

SANDRA: . . . In the beginning I was marking only things like these ones, I was doing this, and *small*, [pause] ah *the important thing*, because, because of the *tight*, because I had said that *small, small, tight important*, I have tried to make a parallelism, and I have done like this, you know? But then I have seen that that one was not important.

**VI.c Notetaking**

MARIA: Let's see, I think that Hemingway's writing style is quite like this, isn't it? Very short sentences and he repeats pronouns and sentences very often. And now he talks already about the husband. I'll make a note of it here: this is about the woman and here he starts talking about the husband.

**VI.d Visualizing (i.e. making drawings)**

MARIA: Sometimes I have a kind of code.

RESEARCHER: Can you tell me about this code?

M: When it is very important I draw like two lines like this, sometimes, since I have to underline so many things, I would underline everything, it is a little hard for me to extract the information, when I have to study something, I underline it all, and when I don't make such a mess of the book, I do it in the margin. . . . Later, what I look for very often is the structure, for example, the introduction. . . . I try it to be as schematic as possible, introduction, the typical structure, introduction, knot and dénouement, and like this I feel very good. I know when I am done with something, when the action begins, then, the ending. . . . They are simply marks, rather than meaning, it helps me focus my attention, like with colours, fluorescents, everything very visual, very graphic, it, very often I get the hang of it through my sight.

**VI.e Summarizing explicit information from text**

MARIA: *They were all very long poems. He was very severe about mistakes and would make her re-do an entire page if there was one mistake. She cried a good deal and they tried several times to have a baby before they left Dijon.* That is, they keep on trying to have a baby. In Paris they couldn't, neither in Dijon, and she becomes a sort of a shorthand writer of, of the poems he writes.

### Appendix D: Number of references to specific strategies made by the participants in the think-aloud protocols

		<i>Montse</i>		<i>Maria</i>		<i>Sandra</i>	
		Session 1	Session 2	Session 1	Session 2	Session 1	Session 2
METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES	Assessing comprehension	31	18	31	11	38	16
	Monitoring the task	6	19	5	10	13	16
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: Interrupting the reading process and modifying task flow	Pausing in silence	4	1	8	2	4	6
	Rereading aloud	34	28	48	13	46	18
COGNITIVE STRATEGY: Using background knowledge to understand (portions of) text.	Relating excerpts (back and forth)	19	28	49	7	34	18
		3	---	6	1	7	10
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: Making use of linguistic knowledge to understand (portions of) text	Morpho-syntactic knowledge	11	(*)	31	2	35	9
	Analogies (L2-L2)	2	2	4	---	9	1
	Different languages	5	(**)	6	(**)	5	(**)
	Word formation	3	1	---	---	1	1
	Typography	---	---	1	---	---	---
	Similarity L1-L2	---	5	---	---	3	1
	Punctuation	---	---	1	---	---	---
Textual organization	1	---	10	10	4	14	
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: Evaluating and interpreting (portions of) text	Evaluating and adding implicit information	22	19	29	15	13	22
	Evaluating with reference to academic knowledge	---	2	8	3	5	10
SUPPORT STRATEGIES	Resourcing	---	---	---	---	1	---
	Underlining	---	(*)	1	3	2	8
	Notetaking	---	---	---	5	---	(*)
	Visualizing	---	---	3	3	(*)	2
	Summarizing	---	5	3	3	1	2

(\*) The strategy was not verbalized in the think-aloud session but in the interview the participant reported a sporadic use.

(\*\*) This strategy was not relevant to the second session since the literary text to be read, unlike the previous one, only included words in English and all main characters were supposed to be English speakers.

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