The Reality of Teaching Reading Comprehension of Lyric Poetry Texts in High Schools in Vietnam

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ABTRACT

In recent years, teaching Literature in the direction of developing learners' capacity has become the main teaching concept in high schools in Vietnam. This article poses the problem of researching the current situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry texts in middle and high schools by using sociological survey method and statistical method in subjects of teachers and high school students nationwide. The obtained research results confirm the clear perceptions of teachers and students in teaching reading comprehension activities of lyric poetry. However, the case of effectively exploiting linguistic elements in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry still has limitations to be overcome. From this situation, teachers of literature in general and poetry in particular aim to establish effective processes and strategies for teaching reading and understanding of lyrical poetry.

Keywords: reading comprehension, teaching reading comprehension lyric poetry, high schools

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching reading comprehension is considered a key step in education in general and teaching Literature in particular. How to teach reading comprehension to be really effective is also an issue that has been constantly discussed by educators for many years (Saqr, 2021). Especially in recent years, teaching Literature in the direction of developing learners' capacity has become the main teaching concept in high schools in Vietnam.

Poetry in general and lyric poetry in particular is a form of artistic and emotional writing. The expressiveness of the elements in the text in general and the emotions of the lyrical subjectcomposing texts in particular are the most basic features that make up this genre. Teaching reading comprehension of poetic texts (lyric poetry) should also aim to clarify its genre characteristics.

Currently, no research specifically investigates the actual situation of teaching reading comprehension in the lyric poetry genre in high schools, thereby aiming to build processes and strategies for teaching reading comprehension. Therefore, this article poses the problem of researching the current situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyrical poetry texts in middle and high schools in the subjects of teachers and students. From this situation, we will establish effective processes and strategies for teaching reading comprehension of lyrical texts effectively

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading comprehension is a research case that has attracted the attention of many educational scientists in the world as well as in Vietnam in the past 50 years. It can be seen that the theory of reading comprehension has gone through three phases: the 60s and 70s of the twentieth century, the 80s and 90s of the twentieth century and the early years of the twenty-first century.

In the 60s and 70s of the twentieth century, the issue of reading and teaching reading was really noticed. Susan E. Israel, Gerald G. Duffy in "Handbook of Research on Reading Comprehension" has outlined the main stages of reading research and teaching reading from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present time of the book. The authors also pointed out that the concept of reading ability from the 17th century to the end of the 19th century only focused on two components: fluency and accuracy, and complete comprehension only meant as a "memorizing the texts". Later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, comprehension became an important indicator of reading comprehension ability. At this stage, Mark Sadoski (in "Toward a Unified Theory of Reading") argues that the first publication dealing with the theoretical model of reading was the model published in 1970 by Singer and Ruddell.

The wave of research on reading in general and reading comprehension in particular emerged strongly in the 80s and 90s of the twentieth century. Authors who researched reading in this stage can be listed as La Berge (1974), Samuel (1977), Rumelhart and Ortony (1977), Kintsch and Van Dijk (1978), Anderson (1984), Gough (1985), Sadoski, Paivio and Goets (1991) and so forth. The familiar books on the research of reading such as Anderson

and Pearson's Handbook of reading research, 1984; Metacognition and Reading comprehension by Garner, 1987; Decoding, reading and reading disability by Gough and Tunner and so on. This is also the stage when certain lines of theory such as cognitive schema theory appeared (in "Role of the reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory" by Gough and Tunner. RC Anderson, 1984; "The representation of knowledge in memory" by Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977), discourse understanding theory (in "Toward a model of text comprehension and production" by Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1978) and so on.

During the 1990s, reading comprehension research focused attention on social perspectives on reading and learning in general. The reader's response theory in reading was focused on review and inquiry by Rosenblatt. Therefore, text comprehension was assessed by the reader's response. Thus, the reader was then not only a "builder", a "corrector" but also a "re-composer" to create a new text in response to the text being read.

In the early years of the 21st century, the ability to read and understand texts was urgently and comprehensively set forth. Reading comprehension has also become an important subject of research interest from international organizations. PISA has conducted a survey to assess the reading comprehension level of students from different countries. Along with PISA, many other organizations and programs have also been interested in reading such as the OECD; the IEA's PIRLS program; LAMP program and so forth.

Basically, research on reading comprehension focuses on a few issues as follows:
- Reading comprehension is an important core competency that everyone should obtain and is one of the foundations for lifelong learning.
- Reading is a complex, flexible process; comprehension is the combined result of many factors, not only the result of the objective reading process from the text and its elements, but also the subjective role of "construction" of the reader based on the text.
- For good and effective reading comprehension, readers need to equip themselves with a lot of skills in which background knowledge and reading comprehension strategies play a very important role. These are the knowledge that determines the reading comprehension results from the perspective of the reader as the "constructor" of the text's meaning.
- Reading researches are also increasingly focused on "reading context", that is, looking at reading in relation to the reader's ability to use language and other external factors (economic - political context, mood - socio-psychology, and consciousness and capacity of the reading community).

In this article, we focus on clarifying the reality of teaching lyric poetry in high schools by answering the following two questions:
(1) What are the perceptions of teachers and students about teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry?
(2) How is the student's ability to read and understand lyric poetry?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

To survey the current situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry texts, we used a survey research design in the form of questionnaires. The questionnaire includes groups of information about respondents, a group of questions about the reality of teaching reading comprehension of poetic texts (perception of teaching reading comprehension of poetic texts, skills of teaching reading comprehension of poetic texts). The questionnaire was distributed to teachers of 20 junior high schools and 27 high schools and students of 4 middle schools and 16 high schools nationwide.

3.2. Research participants

Our survey subjects are teachers of Literature and students in middle and high schools. Teachers surveyed have different teaching experiences (from 1 year to 24 years). Students were also surveyed in different grades from grades 6 to 12.

3.3. Data analysis

Statistical methods are used to analyze the data. Based on forms of expression, the evaluations of teachers and students before the actual situation of teaching and learning to read and understand poetic texts in general and lyric poetry in schools, we have investigated the number and proportion of percentage for each specific form, from which comparisons are made to draw the actual situation in each case.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the two research questions posed, we have surveyed the actual situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry texts in high schools. The specific survey results are as follows:

4.1. Perceptions of teachers and students about teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry
4.1.1 Teachers and students' perceptions about the conceptual nature of reading comprehension of texts and lyric poetry

Table 1: Teachers and students' perceptions about the conceptual nature of text reading comprehension

Subjects	Câu hỏi	Answers			
Teacher	What do you mean by reading comprehension?	1	2	3	4
		0%	4.9%	72%	23.1%
Student	What do you mean by reading comprehension?	1.6%	5.6%	80%	12.8%

Surveying the perceptions of teachers and students about how to understand the concept of reading comprehension of texts, we found that 72% of the teachers and 80% of the students correctly understood text reading comprehension "Text comprehension is the active interaction with the text to create understanding, use, evaluation, and response to the text in order to achieve personal goals, broaden knowledge, and develop one's own potential and participate in the society"; 23.1% of the teachers and 12.8% of the students chose to understand "Text comprehension is discovering the meaningful content contained in the text"; and only 4.9% of the teachers and 5.6% of the students chose the understanding "Text comprehension is recognizing information and features of a text" as well as 1.6% of the students chose the understanding "Text comprehension is pronouncing letters and combining them into words".
The above survey results show that the majority of teachers and students have a correct and comprehensive understanding of the nature of reading comprehension. Only a small number of the teachers and students did not correctly identify the nature of reading comprehension (options 1 and 2 were chosen).

Table 2: Teachers and students' perception about the nature of lyric poetry

Noteworthy elements in lyric poetry		Percentage %	
		Teacher	Student
	Lyrical character	91.6 %	82.8%
	Context	2.8%	36.8%
	Image	85.3%	49.2%
	Rhyme and sound elements	86%	60.8%
	Figurative language	93%	62.8%
	Plot	2.1%	31.6%
	Rhythm	93%	59.2%

The typical elements in lyric poetry perceived to a high degree by the teachers and students are lyrical characters (91.6% for teachers and 82.8% for students), rhyme and sound elements (86% for teachers and 60.8% for students; figurative language (93% for teachers and 62.8% for students) followed by rhythm (93% for teachers and 59.2% for students 59.2%), images (85.3% for teachers and 49.2% for students). Particularly, the context and plots are the two factors little chosen by teachers (2.8% for the context and 2.1 for the plot); and the students' option is also less than other factors (36.8% for the context and 31.6% for the plot).
Looking at the percentage of typical elements in lyric poetry selected by the teachers and students, we found that the teachers and students were basically aware of the typical elements in lyric poetry. The perception of teachers in this survey question shows that the majority of them have distinguished the characteristics of lyric poetry from other genres. For the students, this perception is lower and there are still a large number of the students who think that the context and plot are two elements in lyric poetry. This percentage is still less than other factors. We believe that the students who identify the "context" and "plot" as two elements in lyric poetry are average students.

4.1.2. Teachers and students' perception about the characteristics of poetic language, the role of linguistic elements in lyric poetry and the exploitation of linguistic elements in lyric poetry

Table 3: The role of linguistic elements in lyric poetry texts

Subjects	Questions	Answers (%)			
		1	2	3	4
Teacher	What role does the linguistic factor in lyric poetry play in the process of teaching reading comprehension?	0	0	9.8%	90.2%

Student	What role does the linguistic factor in lyric poetry play in the process of reading comprehension?	0.8%	5.2%	44.4%	49.6%

Regarding the role of the linguistic factor in lyric poetry, the vast majority of the teachers have agreed that language is very important (90.2%), only 9.8% think that language is quite important, and no teacher thinks language is less important and unimportant. For the students, this percentage is somewhat less different, of course, still nearly half of the students have affirmed that language is very important (49.6%), the rest think that language is quite important (44.4%), and only a small number of the students consider language less important (5.2%) and unimportant (0.8%). This percentage is quite reasonable, because teachers are qualified, experienced, and exposed to texts; therefore, they have accurate and objective assessments. For students, during comprehension, they are always influenced by many factors, so the correct understanding of the role of language still has inconsistencies.

Table 4: Teachers and students' perception about language in lyric poetry texts

Subject	Questions	Answers (%)			
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Teacher	How do you evaluate the language in poetic texts and the language of the Vietnamese communicative life?	0%	2.1%	97.2%	0.7%
Student	How do you evaluate the language in poetic texts and the language of human life?	5.6%	5.6%	88%	0.8%

Regarding the perception of the nature of language in lyrical poetry in relation to the language of life, the vast majority of teachers and students affirmed that "poetic language originates from the language of life and is transformed into from the language of life to meet aesthetic needs" (97.2% for teachers and 88% for students). This is an accurate, complete and comprehensive conception of poetic language in relation to the language of life. The concept that "poetic language originates from the language of life" is also correct but incomplete and incomprehensive, chosen by 2.1% of the teachers and 5.6% of the students. The remaining two concepts are not chosen much. The results of this research show that teachers and students basically understood the essence of poetic language. This contributes to effectiveness of teaching of poetry in schools.

Table 5: Exploiting the linguistic elements in lyric poetry

Linguistic elements in lyric poetry	Percentage %	
	Teacher	**Student**
Form of poetry	58%	59.6%
Rhyme	86%	58%
Rhythm	81.8%	65.6%
Tone	77.6%	40%
Lyrical content	44.8%	65.6%
Figurative language	83.9%	64.8%
Word	88.8%	59.6%
Grammar structure	52.4%	49.6%
Artistic figure	51%	59.6%
Themes and ideas	31.5%	45.6%

On the basis of realizing the role of linguistic elements in lyric poetry texts, we continued to survey the teachers and students' perceptions about the linguistic elements in lyric poetry. Linguistic elements are highly perceived by teachers and students such as rhyme (86% for teachers and 58% for students), rhythm (81.8% for teachers and 65.6% for students), figurative language (83.9% for teachers and 64.8% for students), word (88.8% for teachers and 59.6% for students); followed by tone (77.6% for teachers and 40% for students), form of poetry (58% for teachers and 59.6% for students), grammatical structure (52.4% for teachers and 49.6 for students), etc. The artistic figure, lyrical content and ideological topics are the factors less chosen by teachers, but in students, the percentage of these factors still corresponds to the other factors. This shows that teachers have clearly identified elements of the language aspect, while students still do not have specific distinctions.

4.2. Ability to read and understand lyric poetry texts in high school students

4.2.1. Evaluation of teachers and students on the ability of reading comprehension of lyric poetry texts and the ability to exploit linguistic elements in reading comprehension of lyric poetry

Table 6: Evaluation of students' reading comprehension ability

Subject	Questions	Answers (%)			
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Teacher	How do you evaluate your students' reading comprehension ability of lyric texts?	2.1%	44.1%	51%	2.8%
Student	How would you evaluate your own reading comprehension ability of lyric texts?	6.8%	43.6%	40.4%	9.2%

The results obtained were quite similar, the students' reading comprehension ability accounted for the most percentage is Fair (51% for teachers and 40.4% for students), followed by Average (44.1% for teachers and students 43.6%), Good is less (2.8% for teachers and 9.2% for students) and Poor is the least (2.1% for teachers and 6.8% for students). Through this percentage, it can be suggested that students have the reading comprehension ability of lyric poetic texts and know how to comprehend lyric poetry texts but have not reached a high level.

Table 7: Evaluation of students' ability to exploit linguistic elements in reading comprehension of lyric poetry

Subject	Questions	Answers (%)			
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Teacher	How do you evaluate your students' ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of comprehension of lyric poetry?	4.2%	44.1%	47.6%	4.2%
Student	How would you evaluate your ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of comprehension of lyric poetry	7.2%	48%	38%	6.8%

Regarding the exploitation of linguistic elements in the process of comprehending lyric poetry, as per teachers' evaluation, 47.6% of the students were Good and 44.1% of the students were Average. The percentages at Good and Poor were not accounted much (both 4.2%). For students' self-evaluation, 48% of the students self-evaluated Average, 38% self-evaluated Fair, and the remaining were self-evaluated Poor and Good. Thus, although the teacher's evaluation and the student's self-evaluation are different at the level of Fair or Average; basically the teachers and students agreed on the most percentage of the students with the ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of comprehending lyric poetry focused on the level of Fair - Average. This is also consistent with the percentage results on the evaluation of reading comprehension ability of lyric poetic texts in general.

Table 8: The degree of influence of the linguistic factor exploitation in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts

Subject	Câu hỏi	Câu trả lời (%)			
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Teacher	In your opinion, to what extent does failure to know how to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts affects the quality of essays and the students' learning and exams?	0%	1.4%	30.1%	68.5%
Student	In your opinion, to what extent does failure to know how to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts affect the quality of your essays, study and examination?	2.8%	9.2%	49.6%	38.4%

Regarding the degree of influence of the linguistic factor exploitation in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts, 68.5% of the teachers chose Very influential, 30.1% of the teachers chose Quite influential, and only a very small number chose Less influential (1.4%). Among students, Quite influential was chosen the most (49.6%), followed by Very Influential (38.4%), Less influential was only 9.2% and Not influential was

9.2%. 2.8%. This result is consistent with the perception of teachers/students about the role of language in lyric poetic texts.

4.2.2. Causes affecting students' ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry and difficulties faced by students in case they lack the ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry

Table 9: Causes affecting students' ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry

Causes affecting the ability to exploit linguistic elements in reading comprehension of lyric poetry	Percentage %	
	Teacher	Student
1 Students are not aware of the importance of language in reading comprehension.	53.1%	36.4%
2 Students do not know how to effectively exploit linguistic elements to highlight the content of the text.	87.4%	81.2%
3 Students' knowledge of Vietnamese is not good.	59.4%	36.4%
4 Students also depend on sample references.	58%	44%
5 There is a lack of specific and detailed guidance documents on the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry	47.6%	42%

From the percentage of causes affecting the ability to exploit linguistic elements in reading comprehension of lyric poetry, we found that the cause most chosen by the teachers and students is "Students do not know how to effectively exploit linguistic elements to highlight the content of the text." (87.4% for teachers and 81.2% for students). The following causes have different percentages of teacher and student choices. For teachers, 59.4% of the students' Vietnamese knowledge is not good, 58% of the students still depend on sample references, 53.1% of the students are not aware of the importance of the language in reading comprehension, 47.6% of the students lack specific and detailed instructions on the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry. For students, 44% of the students still depend on sample references, 42% of the students lack specific and detailed instructions on how to read and understand lyric texts, 36.4% of the student chose that their knowledge of Vietnamese is not good and are not aware of the importance of language in reading comprehension

From the percentage selected for these causes, in our opinion, in high schools, there should be orientations to help students effectively grasp knowledge about Vietnamese to apply in the process of reading comprehension as well as certain orientations in the use of references. The lack of specific and detailed guidance documents on the process of reading comprehension of lyric texts is a problem for researchers to pay attention to and fully serve teaching and learning activities in high schools.

Table 10: Difficulties faced by learners without competence in exploiting linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry

Difficulties faced by students without competence in exploiting linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry	Percentage %	
	Teacher	Student
1 Students have no foundations to interpret the text correctly.	71.3%	42.8%
2 Students cannot explain and analyze deeply about the works.	90.9%	72.8%
3 Students cannot accurately recognize the artist's point of view and artistic intentions	79.7%	68%
4 Students cannot create attraction in their writing.	53.1%	48.4%

Surveying the difficulties faced by students in case they lack the ability to exploit linguistic elements in the process of reading comprehension of lyric poetry, we find that the difficulty "students cannot explain and analyze deeply about the works" accounts for the highest percentage (90.9% for teachers and 72.8% for students), followed by the difficulty "students cannot accurately recognize the artist's point of view and artistic intentions" (79.7% for teachers and 68% for students). The other difficulties have less percentage. The results of this survey show that the interpretation and analysis of the works as well as the recognition of the artist's point of views and artistic intentions are issues of great interest in reading comprehension.

4.2.3. Forming and improving the capacity to exploit linguistic elements in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts

Table 11: The importance of exploiting linguistic elements towards explaining the works in the teaching method of teachers

Subject	Câu hỏi	Câu trả lời (%)			
		1	2	3	4
Teacher	In the process of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry, do you attach importance to teaching how to exploit linguistic elements to guide the interpretation of the work?	0.7%	0.7%	28.7%	69.9%
Student	In the process of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry, do your teachers attach importance to teaching how to exploit linguistic elements to guide the interpretation of the work?	3.2%	12.4%	44.8%	39.6%

Considering the importance of exploiting linguistic elements to explain the works in teachers' teaching activities, we also asked survey questions and obtained the following results: 69.9% of the teachers themselves recognized it as Very important, 28.7% of the teachers recognized it as Quite important, and the degree of Little and Unimportant accounts for a very small percentage. Among the students, they also found that their teachers recognized it as Quite important (44.8%) and Very important (39.6%). This percentage shows that in the teaching activities of teachers, the vast majority of teachers have attentively exploited linguistic elements in lyric poetry texts.

Table 12: The measuresto form and improve the capacity to exploit linguistic elements in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts

The measures to form and improve the capacity to exploit linguistic elements in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts	Percentage %	
	Teacher	Student
1	Asking students to practice reading comprehension exercises from a linguistic perspective.	91.6%	56%
2	Improving students' knowledge of Vietnamese.	72%	46.4%
3	Having references on how to exploit linguistic aspects of literary texts.	78.3%	81.6%
4	Setting evaluation criteria for skills in exploiting language elements in test questions.	69.9%	60%

Looking at the percentages in the above survey, we find that 91.6% of the teachers think that it is required for "asking students to practice through reading comprehension exercises from a language perspective", 78.3% of the teachers considered it is necessary to have references on how to exploit linguistic aspects of literary texts", 72% of the teachers said that it is necessary to "improve students' knowledge of Vietnamese". Students also chose the measures "with references on how to exploit linguistic aspects of literary texts" with 81.6% as well as "practice through reading comprehension exercises from a linguistic perspective" with 56%. Therefore, in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetic texts in particular and reading comprehension of literary texts in general, high school teachers need to strengthen their students' practice to effectively exploit linguistic elements in texts. At the same time, researchers also need to build a reference system to serve teachers and students to effectively exploit linguistic aspects in texts. This will definitely create a positive effect for students in the process of reading comprehension in schools.

5.CONCLUSION
On the basis of analyzing and understanding the current situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry in high schools, we found that teachers and students had clear perceptions about this activity as well as a sense of improving the teaching of reading comprehension to help students discover and thoroughly grasp works. However, the case of effectively exploiting linguistic elements in teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry still has limitations to be overcome.
Therefore, it is very necessary to research to form a process of teaching reading comprehension of lyrical poetic texts in which effectively exploiting linguistic elements in the text.
Exploring the current situation of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry in teachers and students in high schools is a guide to help researchers shape the process of teaching reading comprehension of lyric poetry to meet the expectations of high school teachers and students.

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