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Exploring Reading Strategy Use of Wollo University First Year Social Science Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the reported reading strategies use of university students. It was particularly concerned with determining the frequency level, type, and variety of reading strategies used by the participant students when reading academic materials. The study was conducted in Wollo University in Ethiopia. The research was quantitative in approach, and descriptive in design. Using simple random and available sampling techniques, 135 first-year social science students enrolled in the Communicative Skills course were chosen from three sections to participate in the study. The survey of reading strategies (SORS) of Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002) was used to gather data from the participant students. To determine what reading strategies participants employed, the frequency distribution of their responses to each of the three categories of the SORS—global, problem-solving, and supportive reading strategies was calculated via the descriptive statistics such as frequency counting, mean value and standard deviation of their reading strategy use. The results were used to indicate whether a learner is a low, medium, or high reading strategy user. The findings of the study revealed that Wollo University social science first year students can be categorized as medium strategy users. As the most striking strategy, subjects reread to increase their understanding when they face difficult text. As a least preferred strategy, however, participants reported to use reading aloud when the text is hard. Moreover, results of the study revealed that participants reported to adopt reading strategies in academic texts at the frequency level of the high usage of problem-solving strategies, followed by medium usage of support and global reading strategies. Based on the findings, it was recommended that awareness raising should be made to make students' use of support and global reading strategies at higher frequency.

Key words: Global, Metacognitive, Problem-solving and Support reading strategies

INTRODUCTION

Over the last four decades, a prominent shift of paradigm has taken place in the field of language teaching/learning yielding greater attention on learners and learning rather than teachers and teaching. This was resulted from unsatisfactory researchers' endeavor to find out a single teaching method, classroom technique and instructional material that suit all the time, in all classes, with all students in promoting language learning (Oxford, 1990). The shift first appeared on scholars' view difference toward language itself. Prior to 1970s,

language, according to Nunan (2013), was seen as a system of forms which ought to be understood by learners themselves or by their teachers (p. 51). The ultimate objective of language teaching was to enable learners obtain a set of good language habits which can be executed by memorization of dialogue and pattern drills (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 10). From the 1970s onward, however, due to the development of the information-processing model of language learning in cognitive psychology, scholars began viewing language as a vehicle for conveying meaning (ibid). As a result, language pedagogy shifted

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towards considering how learners' actions could impact their language learning outcomes (Kazi & Iqbal, 2011).

Researchers were, then, interested in the variables that account for success in learning a second/foreign language. Chief among these variables that may contribute a lot to a learners' variability in the rate of foreign language learning and in the ultimate level of achievement, is the use of a variety of language learning strategies in general, and how EFL learners comprehend academic texts in particular (Koda, 2005). Thus, it's crucial to assess students' awareness of reading strategies or understanding of how to use them before attempting to improve reading comprehension, (Singhal, 2001).

In Ethiopia, many EFL learners enter the tertiary education less preparation for reading requirements of their academic programs. As a result, they exhibited failure in their academics in every level, particularly in reading (MOE, 2018; Yenus, 2017). The failure of Students in reading is concerning because it significantly hampers the overall teaching and learning process. Particularly, at tertiary level the problem is more serious because reading is more important to complete all university courses and to learn content area subjects and the English language itself (Yenus, 2017).

Despite previous investigations into reading, the current reality still indicates that the need for further work to effectively address the challenges of academic reading. This is said because even these days, there is high dissatisfaction with students' reading performance and practice of teaching reading among EFL instructors and researchers (Belilew, 2015; MoE, 2018; Yenus, 2017). According to MoE (2018), even students who passed the General Secondary School Leaving Examination are extremely unprepared to read and comprehend written texts in English. In addition to these findings, the researcher's teaching experience gave him insights that students at university level lack the required reading competence. Most of his students at Wollo University, for instance, have been observed facing difficulties in performing reading tasks and activities in English language. They face challenge to interpret the written message and paraphrase the sentences of text; some other students lack the background knowledge via which they easily interpret the text; and sometimes, even if they have the essential background knowledge, they cannot make use of it. Moreover, because of the insufficient reading skills that students have, a large number of them cannot, for example, differentiate facts from opinions, and they cannot make their own evaluations and judgements. The case of other Ethiopian university students is quite similar in that a large number of tertiary students still lack a required reading competence and have still difficulty in constructing accurate comprehension of their course module or reference materials (Belilew, 2015; MoE, 2018).

Students' poor reading performance may be due to various reasons. However, the present researcher feels that students' lack of knowledge and awareness of how to apply reading strategies could be the possible factors that affect their reading comprehension. Nonetheless, studies in Ethiopian EFL context on reading strategies are scant, implying that the issue has not received adequate attention. Particularly, no studies have been conducted on Ethiopian university students' reading strategies via the reading-specific survey of Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002). This descriptive research was, therefore, conducted to fill this gap.

The following research questions were developed to help achieve these goals:

1. What type of reading strategies do first year social science students use in their academic reading?
2. How often do first year social science students use reading strategies in their academic reading?
3. What are the most and the least reading strategies employed by first year social science students in their academic reading?

LITERATURE REVIEW
Definition of Reading Strategy

Researchers like Block (1986) cited in Do and Phan (2021) defined reading strategies as how readers perceive a task, what textual clues they attend to, how they make sense of what they read and what they do when they do not understand. Garner (1987) cited in Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) supported the idea saying reading strategies are "Generally deliberate, playful activities undertaken by active learners, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure" (p. 50). The definition signifies that in addition to promoting reading comprehension, readers use various strategies as problem solving mechanism to overcome their difficulties. Barnett (1988) cited in Li (2010); Erler and Finkbeiner (2007); Pani (2004) have also viewed reading strategies as mental operations that involve readers' intentional approach to a text to make sense of what they are reading. Coinciding with this idea, Li (2010) described the term as specific, deliberate, conscious techniques that readers employ to enhance their comprehension or retention of the textual information (P. 185). Along similar line, in this

research, EFL reading strategies are defined as conscious processes ones in which readers understand the use of EFL reading strategies as they read the text.

From the definitions presented so far, we can deduce that there is a semantic issue in the sense that the term reading strategy is referring to the same notion with different wording. Moreover, it was made clear that awareness about reading strategies is very important for readers to make sense on their reading. Those who are aware of their reading strategies become "Good readers," who can "apply more strategies more frequently and more effectively than poor readers" (Pani, 2004). In addition to consciousness, in the provided definitions the following aspects of reading strategies were highlighted: they change from moment to moment; they are regarded as tactics (for attacking a problem); their use depends on the specific reading tasks; Context is a determinant factor; they aimed at improving performance; they make up for the breakdowns in comprehension.

Classification of Reading Strategies

Many researchers grouped reading strategies into various categories. A taxonomy proposed by Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), which the current research follows, grouped reading strategies into metacognitive, cognitive, and/or support strategies. A year later, in 2002 they renamed the first two as: global reading strategies and problem-solving reading strategies respectively.

As to the explanation of Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002), metacognitive or Global reading strategies (GLOB) are those intentional, carefully planned technique by which learners monitor and manage their reading. They further expressed that these strategies represent a set of reading strategies oriented toward a global analysis of text and can be thought of a generalized, intentional reading strategies aimed at setting the stage for the reading act.

Problem-solving reading strategies (PROB) are actions, procedures or strategies employed by readers to solve problems which come to the surface when the part of a text becomes terribly difficult to read and comprehend (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2002). Since these techniques appear to be oriented around strategies for solving problems when the test becomes difficult to read, they provide readers with well-action plans that allow them to navigate through the text skillfully and thereby mitigate their comprehension problems (ibid).

Support reading strategies (SUP) are referred to as "basic support mechanism intended to aid the readers to comprehend the texts" (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002, p. 4). These strategies occur when readers seek for an outside help/aid or individual practical techniques while reading English academic texts to improve their reading comprehension; hence, they primarily involve using devices and techniques outside reference materials (such as the use of dictionary), taking notes, underline or circling information and other practical strategies (ibid). These strategies provide the support mechanism aimed at sustaining responses to reading.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study is to bring to light the range and variety of the reading strategies employed by Wollo University first year social science students' and how frequently these participants use these reading strategies in their academic reading in English. So, it is mainly quantitative in type and descriptive in design. Hence, it attempted to get data about the current status of a language behavior as they exist at the time of investigation.

Research Setting and Participants of the Study

This study was conducted at Wollo University, the site which the researcher has chosen purposefully. And the participants were selected from first year social science students who were enrolled for Communicative English Skills Course in 2022 academic year. Since the first-year students were assigned to each Freshman English class according to the alphabetization principle, it would be appropriate to choose specific sections rather than individuals from among the entire sections. This helps the researcher to easily access the subjects in their respective classes.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Using random sampling technique, three sections out of 12 were selected for the present study. The three sections in total comprise 138 students, on average of 46 in each. All the selected participants filled and returned the questionnaire. However, because three of the participants missed some items from the SORS, they were excluded from the study. Thus, the data was analyzed only for those 135 students who completed the questionnaire correctly.

Instrument

This study used Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS) instrument. It was designed by Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002) to measure metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies among adult and adolescent students who spoke English as a second or foreign language.

SORS comprises 30 close-ended items in total under three subcategories, namely Global Reading Strategies, Problem Solving Strategies and Support reading Strategies each of which consists of 13, 8 and 9 items respectively.

Concerning the way sample response, the thirty statements of the closed ended questionnaire follow the general format 'I do such and such' and Each of these items is measured by a 5-point, Likert-type scale. Participants require to indicate their response by writing the numbers of the alternatives of the questionnaire. A score of "5 meant that the participants always used a strategy; 4 meant it was used most of the time; 3 meant sometimes using the strategy; 2 meant using the strategy occasionally; and 1 meant the student never used the strategy" (Mokhtari & Sheorey 2002 p. 4).

To the best knowledge of the present researcher, the SORS in this study is adopted only to solicit learners' reading strategy use in Ethiopian EFL context for the first time. It was, therefore crucial to check reliability and validity of this instrument in the pilot study. Therefore, participants for the pilot study were selected from those taking Communicative English in 2021 academic year. The questionnaire was administered to a class of 22 students who were randomly chosen from the entire sections.

Then, the internal consistency reliabilities of the questionnaire (30 items) responses for the whole participant students were calculated in the pilot study, and they were found to be 0.83 Cronbach's alpha. Since the results of reliability of the pilot study showed more than the Cronbach Alpha value .7, it can be stated that the value of the items of the SORS were suitable, consistent and valid for conducting this study. Furthermore, the content and face validity of the questionnaire items were reviewed and assessed by an expert in the field of measurement and two PhD TEFL students whose theme of research was related to strategy. As a result, the researcher could verify that all the items in the SORS questionnaire could serve the purposes they were meant to serve.

Method of Data Analysis
In order to identify what FL reading strategies participants employed, SORS scores for each subscale were calculated by using scoring guidelines provided by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). First, students' responses to all closed ended items (SORS) were computed. Second, in order to make the responses more manageable for statistical analysis, they were examined at the category level. Hence, students' responses to each of the three categories (i.e., global reading strategies, problem solving

strategies, and supportive reading strategies) along with their preference for each item was computed by mean, standard deviation and the scope and general rank in terms of their frequency distribution. Means and standard deviations were computed to determine the students' individual and overall reading strategy use. These values showed the profile of learners as they are low, medium or high strategy users.

Using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS 26 version), the data were analyzed through descriptive statistics to determine the frequency of strategies employed by the learners. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means and standard deviations was computed to sum up the learners' overall reading strategy use. It was also used to put in a rank order the strategy categories from the most preferred to the least preferred category. This would deliver an overview of the sample of Wollo University first year students.

Procedure of Data Collection
Primarily, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the department head and the instructors and they expressed their agreement. Then, the researcher scheduled for questionnaires administration time. Then after, the researcher in the presence of the instructor administered SORS to the students during class time. During administration of the SORS, participants were told that the questionnaire distributed consisted of questions about their English reading strategy use and were instructed to read each of the 30 statements in the SORS Questionnaire and circle the number which best indicated their perceived use of the strategies. They were also advised to work at their own pace, and reminded them to keep in mind reading academic materials while responding to the strategy statements. They were also told that they should ask for any clarification they might need as they filled-in the questionnaire. After 20 minutes, all questionnaire papers were collected at the same period they were distributed. The study data was collected in the first semester from June to August 2022 G.C.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In this section, participants' overall uses of reading strategies, their strategy use in the three categories, and their most and least frequently used reading strategies are presented.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the Overall Reading Strategy Categories

Category of Reading Strategies	Number of Strategies	Number of Respondents	Mean	SD	Rank
Global	13	135	2.99	1.03	3
Problem-solving	8	135	3.64	0.90	1
Support	9	135	3.03	0.95	2
Overall	30		3.18	1.01	

As shown in Table 1, the first category in rank is the problem-solving reading strategy use (M = 3.64), which, according to Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002), is in high usage frequency scale. This indicates that participants always employed PROB in their reading. SUP with the mean of (3.03) and GLOB with the mean of (2.99) took the second and third ranks respectively. As these two means values fell in 2.5-3.49 range which, according Sheorey and Mokhtari's frequency scale, are interpreted as in medium strategy use range, and which used to describe those participants who use the strategies sometimes. Therefore, only one strategy category that is, problem-solving strategy belongs to high frequency range, and the other two: global reading and supporting reading strategies pertain to medium frequency range. The overall mean value of the respondents' reading strategy use, (3.18) is also in medium usage. So, the respondents are utilizing the SORS sometimes. So that Wollo University first year social science students can be categorized as those who are medium users of reading strategies.

In addition to this, among the three categories of reading strategies, the category of global reading strategy has the highest standard deviation (=1.03). The implication is that there is a higher difference among participants in their answers for the strategies of this category. Nonetheless, the standard deviation for problem-solving reading strategies (SD=0.90) is the lowest indicating that the degree scores chosen by the respondents toward this statement are very close to the mean, and the use of the strategies of the category does not vary greatly among the individuals. In order to account for any important divergence among the groups, the participants' use of individual strategies by category is presented in the tables below.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Various Global Reading Strategies

No.	Item	N	Mean	SD	Rank-order of the Scope	General Rank
Q1	Setting purpose for reading	135	2.69	1.26	13	28
Q3	Adopting prior knowledge	135	2.94	1.17	7	21
Q4	Previewing text before reading	135	3.25	1.03	1	9
Q6	Checking whether the content matches reading purpose.	135	3.1	1.04	4	16
Q8	Skimming through text characteristics	135	2.87	0.87	12	27
Q12	Deciding what to read	135	3.17	1	3	12
Q15	Taking advantages of text features (tables)	135	3.24	0.6	2	10
Q17	Using context clues	135	2.98	1.1	6	20
Q20	Using typographical features	135	3.04	0.88	5	17
Q21	Analyzing and evaluating what is read	135	2.93	1.21	8	22

Q23	Checking understanding of new information	135	2.92	1.02	9	23
Q24	Guessing the meaning of the text	135	2.89	1	11	25
Q27	Confirming predictions about the text	135	2.91	0.94	10	24

As demonstrated in Table 2, the strategy most preferred with the (M = 3.25, SD 1.03) among GLOB was "Previewing text before reading". In contrast, the strategy least preferred by the participants with (M= 2.69, SD 1.26) was "Setting purpose in mind when they read". Yet, despite least preferred by the participants, setting purpose has many functions in academic reading. It determines the overall readers' activities during while reading stage. The speed they use; the area they focus on; the choices they make before they read a text are influenced by purpose. Moreover, whenever learners pose questions to set a purpose for reading, they direct their thinking; they read actively. Thus, in the absence of having purpose in mind, readers do nothing because they do not know what to do and how to do.

Although all the global reading strategies are anticipated to be used frequently by the students to prepare themselves for their reading, evidence obtained from students' response in the table above witnessed that, each of the respondents' strategies choice mean value fell in the medium frequency scale. That is, they adopt the strategies sometimes when they read academic materials. This implies that the students seemed that they lacked the opportunities they could get from using the GLOB at high frequency during their reading. This could be due to lack of awareness on the importance of GLOB and inadequate support from their teachers.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Various Problem-solving Reading Strategies

No.	Item	N	Mean	SD	Rank in the scope	General Rank
Q7	Reading slowly and carefully	135	4.16	0.69	2	2
Q9	Trying to keep focused after distractions	135	3.58	0.8	4	5
Q11	Adjusting reading pace	135	3.58	0.73	4	6
Q14	Focusing closely on the content of the text	135	3.51	0.79	5	7
Q16	Pausing and thinking about what is read	135	3.15	0.95	7	13
Q19	Visualizing information while reading to remember	135	3.73	0.83	3	3
Q25	Reading again for better understanding	135	4.22	0.72	1	1
Q28	Predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words	135	3.18	1.05	6	11

As can be seen in Table 3 above, the item marked most or first in rank out of thirty SORS, was "Rereading for better understanding" of PROB with (M = 4.22) which is high usage. As this mean value of students' strategy use is above average, it indicates that students employ this strategy widely and many of them knew the importance of rereading the given text to have clarity on the idea before reading quickly. It also implies that many EFL learners at university level tackle their comprehension difficulty via repeating what they are reading.

Out of eight problem-solving reading strategies, six of them (75%) were reported to be applied with high frequency (mean scores of 3.5 or above), while two remaining strategies types fell in the medium usage group. This envisages that majority students adopted almost all kinds of problem-solving reading strategies at high frequency scale.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for the Category of Supporting Reading Strategies

No.	Support Strategies	N	Mean	SD	Rank in the Scope	General Rank
Q2	Taking notes while reading	135	2.98	0.75	6	19
Q5	Reading aloud for better understanding	135	2.55	0.77	9	30
Q10	Underlining and circling information in the text	135	3.42	0.86	2	8
Q13	Adopting reference materials	135	3.68	0.69	1	4
Q18	Paraphrasing for better understanding	135	3.09	1.01	3	14
Q22	Going back and forth to find associations between ideas	135	3.06	0.77	4	15
Q26	Asking oneself questions	135	3.01	1.12	5	18
Q29	Translating into native language while reading	135	2.89	0.92	7	26
Q30	Thinking of information in both languages	135	2.61	1.03	8	29

As indicated in Table 4, participants preferred most to the strategy of using reference materials (e.g., a dictionary) with (M = 3.68, SD 0.69). This mean value implies that high number of the respondents most frequently use dictionary to find the meaning of difficult words. Students focus on use of dictionary during reading to a large extent, however, gravely influence their understanding of texts, for it is very likely to observe their reading being interrupted.

Conversely, they preferred least to the reading aloud strategy. This item is last in rank in the SORS with the mean of (2.55 SD 0.77), which is medium usage. This implies that many EFL learners seem to read materials silently. However, reading aloud has been found as a strategic behavior that L2 readers should have employed to enhance their comprehension when they encounter comprehension challenges in L2 reading. In line with this, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) stated that reading aloud is useful strategies in learning to read, and is important to remember what has been read.

In general, except the strategy of using reference materials which is in high usage, all the other support strategies fell in medium level indicating that participants reported to use these strategies in medium usage.

The general analysis of the students' responses for the three categories revealed that only seven strategies of reading were used in high usage by the students in comprehending the text with the mean 3.5 or higher. Six out of these strategies were Problem solving Reading Strategies, along with one Support

reading strategy. The rest twenty-three strategies were employed with moderate mean score rated from 2.5 to 3.49 in the tables above. Of which thirteen strategies are for GLOB, eight for SUP and two for PROB. None of the three categories strategies has mean scores below 2.4, which is low usage.

Table 5: the five Most Frequently Strategies used by the participants

No.	Strategy Type	Item	Mean	SD	General Scope
Q25	PROB	Reading again for better understanding	4.22	0.72	First
Q7	PROB	Reading slowly and carefully	4.16	0.69	Second
Q19	PROB	Visualizing information while reading to remember	3.73	0.83	Third
Q13	SUP	Adopting reference materials	3.68	0.69	Fourth
Q11	PROB	Adjusting reading pace	3.58	0.73	Fifth

As demonstrated in the above table, in descending order, the five reading strategies used most were Rereading, Reading slowly but carefully, Visualizing information ranked first, second and third respectively, and Adjusting reading pace ranked fifth. These four reading strategies all fell under the problem-solving strategy category.

On the other hand, the item marked most that ranked in fourth place was adopting reference materials from support reading strategy category. These five reading strategies as a whole were reported to be used more frequently by all the participants and used more than other strategies. In other words, the subjects adopted the strategies in the frequency of high usage.

Table 6: The five Least Frequently used Strategies by the Participants

No.	Strategy Type	Item	Mean	SD	General Rank
Q29	SUP	Translating into native language while reading	2.89	0.92	26th
Q8	GLOB	Skimming through text characteristics	2.87	0.87	27th
Q1	GLOB	Setting purpose for reading	2.69	1.26	28th
Q30	SUP	Thinking of information in both languages	2.61	1.03	29th
Q5	SUP	Reading aloud for better understanding	2.55	0.77	30th

As shown in the above table, the least preferred five strategies from the higher to lowest were Translating

into native language, Thinking about information in both English and mother tongue and Reading aloud ranking 26, 29 and 30 respectively from the category of support reading strategies. Additionally, Setting purpose of reading and Skimming through text characteristics rank 27 and 28 respectively from the category of global reading strategy. All of which fell in a medium use range. So that participant students use sometimes.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to uncover what reading strategies Wollo University first year social science students use in their academic reading. Three frequency criteria based on Oxford's (1990) standard were used to determine the frequency of usage of the strategies: high frequency use (3.5-5.0), medium frequency use (2.5-3.49), and low frequency use (1.0-2.49). A substantial corpus of research on language learning strategies has followed these criteria. However, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2002) utilized these criteria to determine students' use of reading strategies. Accordingly, the participants' responses about their strategy usage were divided into three groups: high, medium, and low usage. Thus, using the descriptive analyses of the SORS, the study identified first year social science students overall

reading strategies, strategy use in the three categories, and the most and least frequently used strategies.

In fact, university students need to frequently utilize various reading strategies to be proficient readers. Nonetheless, the current study's results showed that the overall mean score of the 30 strategies used by the 135 participants fell into the medium frequency range. This shows that there is a moderate awareness of all the strategies. Hence, respondents are thought of as medium users, or participants sometimes use the reading strategies when they are academic materials. This finding is congruent with Meniado's (2016) study on the reading strategies used by Arab EFL students in Saudi Arabia. The study's respondents gave the reading strategies a medium frequency rating. They are, therefore, medium strategy users who sometimes employ reading strategies to understand academic materials, just like the subjects in the current study.

Categorically, the most preferred reading strategy category of all is the problem-solving reading strategies followed by support and global reading strategies. It's interesting to note that this research finding follows the same category order as studies by Shang (2018) and Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001). The reason to prefer PROB at high frequency is that the participants regarded these strategies as tools that could help them deal with reading comprehension

problems (Meniado, 2016). Learners who prefer these strategies more can develop these strategies and get into the habit of using them. Thus, when Wollo University students encounter difficulties in understanding academic texts, they tend to use more problem-solving reading strategies at high frequency rate. As noted by Baker (2008), readers who are highly conscious of their reading challenges may adjust their reading speed or try a different text to give them context. This was what was observed on first year social science students of wollo University, which suggests that these students do possess certain metacognitive knowledge which help them mitigate their reading difficulty.

The above finding aligns with the results of earlier researches conducted among EFL students by Temur and Bahar (2011), Al-Sobhani (2013), Fitrisia et al. (2015) and Ghwela et al. (2017). In their findings, problem-solving strategies were reported to be used by the participants at a rate of high frequency. While global and support strategies were claimed to be used at a rate of medium frequency. This indicates that support and global reading strategies did not receive much attention in class, for teachers might lack awareness about these important strategies and may not present them in their reading instruction. This also may have some relevance with the current study.

However, the results are inconsistent with the findings of Jafari and Shokrpour (2012) and Tavakoli (2014), both of whom discovered that Iranian learners use support strategies the most, followed by global, and then problem-solving strategies the least.

The second most popular category of reading strategies used by participants of the study was support reading strategy category. These participants claimed to employ these strategies moderately. A rationale for not using supporting strategies at high rate may be attributed to the level of the participants. Since the participants are university students, they might ponder these strategies as elementary ones. In line with this, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) noted that supporting strategies are usually attributed to strategies learners use at the beginning stage of language learning. However, inconsistent to the current study, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) on a study of undergraduate English language learners found "students attribute high value to support reading strategies regardless of their abilities" (p. 445).

The third preferred category of reading strategies used by participants of the study was global strategies. These participants reported to use global strategies at moderate level. This is meant that they were employing these strategies sometimes. A reason

for the strategies to be less adopted by the students in their English reading is that they were higher level strategies which were not easily mastered by the students. A possible second reason is that Students are not perhaps regularly taught how to read college textbooks via global reading strategies. Students who are not taught how to employ global reading strategies encounter difficulties in using them in academic reading, for many of them are demanding to many students (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2002). Accordingly, the great majority of Wollo University students must receive rigorous instruction in using a variety of global reading strategies along with relevant reading exercises.

Nonetheless, a study result of Barrot (2016) contrasts to the finding of the current study. The participants of his study preferred global reading strategies as their top choice, (which was the last preference of the participants of the current study), followed by problem-solving and support strategies.

Most and Least used Strategies
While seeing the five most often used strategies of the three categories, four of them belong to problem-solving reading strategy category, and only one pertains to the category of support reading strategy. On the other hand, while seeing the five least often used strategies of the three categories, three of them are from support and two of them are from global reading strategies category. Although similar studies were conducted by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) and Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), their participants choice as a most and least strategies are quite different. This was perhaps because there is a context, culture and personality differences between these two studies and the present study.

CONCLUSION
This study has provided a picture of reading strategies preferred by Wollo University first year students. On the basis of the findings, the ensuing conclusions are drawn.

The participants' overall mean frequency scale of reading strategy use was moderate which means they sometimes use the reading strategies while reading academic English texts.

At categorical level, out of the three strategy sub-categories, only problem-solving reading strategies were employed by students at high usage. And support reading strategies and global reading strategies were adopted at medium usage. Therefore, when students have difficulties in comprehending academic texts, they tend to use more problem-solving reading strategies than global or support reading strategies.

At individual strategy by category, the strategy of rereading from problem-solving category is the most frequently used one while the strategy of reading aloud from support reading strategy category is the least frequently used.

Many students were not able to use complex strategies such as "setting purpose, and Skimming through text characteristics" which requires good reading skills.

RECOMMENDATION
On the basis of the results of the study, the following suggestions are made:
Students should be made conscious of the strategies they could use to read the texts. They need to know which strategies to adopt and how to utilize them. Particularly, they need rigorous training on making use of different kinds of global reading strategies with relevant reading exercises. Thus, EFL instructors of universities should primarily realize the current use of reading strategies of their students by exploring what reading strategies the students use at the beginning of instructions and try to know their students' strengths and weaknesses so that they might provide students with opportunities to employ new strategies and address their weakness. In addition, they should enhance their students' reading abilities by modeling the different types of reading strategies in classroom for further use outside classroom and by explaining to the students what, how and when particular or group of strategies are useful.

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