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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# Relationship Between English as a Foreign Language Learners' Use of Reading Strategies and Their Perceptions of Critical Reading Self-Efficacy

**Ali DİKİCİ**[1] ID**, Betül ALTAŞ**[2] ID

[1]Department of Foreign Languages, Harran University, School of Foreign Languages, Şanlıurfa, Türkiye
[2]Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Çağ University, Vocational School, Mersin, Türkiye

**Abstract**

The aim of this study is to determine whether English as a foreign language learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy are meaningfully correlated. Additionally, the study aims to examine whether these learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy are different in terms of gender, department, and how often they read English texts. A convenience sampling was utilized to select participants who were 255 English as a foreign language learners at foreign language schools in two state universities. "Demographic Information Form," "Reading Strategy Use Scale," and "Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale" were the data collection instruments for this quantitative survey-based research. Results demonsrate that a significant correlation is seen between participants' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy. Additionally, the difference is not significant between their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy in terms of gender; however, total scores of their reading strategies use are significantly different in terms of gender. Total scores of their use of reading strategy and perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy are significantly different in terms of how often they read English texts. However, total scores of participants' perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy and use of reading strategy are not different in terms of their department.

**Keywords:** Critical reading, critical reading self-efficacy, EFL learners, reading strategies, use of reading strategies

## Introduction

In today's global world, the information provided to individuals through texts involves cultural and ideological values that have their meanings beyond the textual level. In this regard, critical thinking can be regarded as a vital component of the 21st-century literacy because individuals can only understand the hidden meanings and values by using their critical thinking skills. In Kroskrity's (2000) account, language and discourse incorporate experiences of a specific class, gender, and elites or social mechanisms. And, deconstructing a text requires questioning the discursive formations and practices in the social system. However, learners can have difficulty in interacting with texts if reading aims to impose preconceived notions and preset skills on learners (Altaş, 2018; Altaş & Şahinkarakaş, 2022). Therefore, reading is a significant process that improves individual thought, and learners should raise awareness about how to offer a critical approach to texts while reading.

Brantmeier (2004) refers to reading strategies as the comprehension techniques used to make meaning. For instance, proficient readers recognize metacognitive techniques (Cohen, 2014; Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). Reading also requires employing cognitive strategies and metacognitive reading strategies (Ali & Razali, 2019). Furthermore, L2 readers use processing strategies to develop awareness, accept ambiguity, establish intra-sentential and inter-sentential linkages, and utilize

background information (Pritchard, 1990). The use of reading strategies enhances language use in diverse contexts (Chamot, 2005; Cohen, 2007; Oxford, 2017).

Considering the easy access to information in today's global world, critical reading emerges as the significant part of reading (Din, 2020). Critical reading, as an ability, helps an individual verify the accuracy of information by going beyond the textual meaning (Koçak, 2020). That means, texts have ideological, cultural, and economic values embedded in a particular context. Here, critical thinking is seen as an individual's responsibility (Bowell & Kemp, 2005). According to Hoffman and Schraw (2009), the contextual and individual elements have an impact on critical reading skills. In essence, individuals' self-efficacy perceptions affect their decision-making processes, the way they solve the problems, and their general thinking (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Maddux & Kleiman, 2016). In Farmer and Tierney's (2017) opinion, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief about his/her own qualities to create new products. Self-efficacy is a psychological construct which controls the performance of individuals (Benight & Bandura, 2004). Therefore, self-efficacy can predict the enhancement of critical thinking. Eccles and Wigfield (2020) claim that learner motivation and interests also constitute the learner's critical thinking.

Though learners' use of reading strategies as well as their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy are explored as separate concepts,

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the relationship between these concepts should also be examined in the English as a foreign language (EFL) field (Gan et al., 2021). The relationship between these concepts is therefore worth searching it. Accordingly, this study tests whether there is a meaningful correlation between EFL learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy. Additionally, the study determines whether EFL learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy are different in terms of demographic characteristics. Thus, the research questions are:

RQ1. Do EFL learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy vary according to:

a) gender?
b) department?
c) how often EFL learners read English texts?

RQ2. Is there a significant relationship between EFL learners' use of reading strategies and their perceptions of critical reading self-efficacy?

## Methods

In this research study, the quantitative survey-based research was used. Survey research involves a large population to obtain data with the aim of having information and drawing conclusions about the general characteristics of a large sample, and in survey research, the relation between two variables is also tested to see the degree of change between variables (Karasar, 2014; Şimşek, 2012). The permission which was obtained from the developers of two scales used for this study was taken before the scales were employed. As this study is from a Master's thesis, the Research Ethics Committee Approval (Approval no: E-81570533-044-2200001882, Date: 09.03.2022) was taken from the Çağ University Research Ethics Committee. The permissions which were also required to take from the School of Foreign Languages of two Turkish state universities were taken to carry out the study. A consent form to request participants' consent was also provided in the scales. As a consequence of this, data were obtained from participants in the 2021–2022 academic year during face-to-face sessions between March and May.

### Research Group

A convenience sampling method was used to select the participants since it was easy to contact and they were conveniently available to involve in the study. 255 EFL learners participating in this study were all Turkish students at preparatory schools of two Turkish state universities. 158 (62.0%) were females and 97 (38.0%) were males. 98 (38.4%) of them were in the English language teaching (ELT) department. 157 (61.6%) were in other departments.

### Data Collection Tools

Demographic Information Form, "Reading Strategy Use (RSU) Scale" which Tuncer (2011) adapted and developed, and "Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale" which Karadeniz (2014) developed were used as data collection tools.

### Demographic Information Form

The form was prepared by the researcher of this study. There were demographic questions related to department, gender, and how often EFL learners read English texts. Gender is categorized as "male" and "female." Department is classified as "other" and "English language teaching." Additionally, how often EFL learners read English texts is classified as "never," "seldom," "sometimes," and "often."

### Reading Strategy Use Scale

To determine reading strategies used in a foreign language, a 28-item scale, which Deane and Pereira-Laird (1997) developed and Tuncer (2011) adapted into Turkish culture, was used. The six-factor scale explains 53.871% of the total variance and Cronbach alpha coefficients were at .77, .73, .76, .73, .72, and .70 for "Constructing Strategies," "Planning Strategies," "Management Strategies," "Assisting Strategies," "Visualization Strategies," and "Self-regulation Strategies" factors, respectively. The overall $\alpha$ coefficient was at .89 for "Reading Strategies Use Scale." Each item is rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging as "Never", "Seldom", "Sometimes", "Usually" and "Always." In this present study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were at .69, .71, .61, .64, .71, and .70 for "Constructing Strategies," "Planning Strategies," "Management Strategies," "Assisting Strategies," "Visualization Strategies," and "Self-regulation Strategies" factors, respectively. The overall $\alpha$ coefficient was at .87 for "RSU Scale."

### Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale

In order to assess critical reading self-efficacy perceptions of students at higher education, a 33-item scale which Karadeniz (2014) developed was used. The five-factor scale explains 53.857% of the total variance and Cronbach alpha coefficients were at .866, .828, .841, .830, and .798 for "Inquiry," "Analysis," "Evaluation," "Finding Similarities and Differences," and "Inference" factors, respectively. The overall $\alpha$ coefficient was at .937 for "Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale." Each item is rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (5)." In this current study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were at .80, .66, .74, .78, and .73 for "Inquiry," "Inference," "Analysis," "Evaluation," and "Finding Similarities and Differences" factors, respectively. In total, the scale consists of five factors. The overall $\alpha$ coefficient was at .93 for "Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale."

### Data Collection Process

Data was obtained in the 2021–2022 academic year during face-to-face sessions through the distribution of scales between March and May. Participants' consent was requested through a consent form. Prior to using the scales, the permission was required to take from the authors who developed the two scales. The Research Ethics Committee Approval was obtained from University Research Ethics Committee in 2022. To conduct the study, the required permissions were obtained from the Schools of Foreign Languages of two Turkish state universities.

### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were employed to calculate mean scores. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients were also calculated to assess the normal distribution of the data sets. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), parametric tests are employed as the coefficients of skewness and kurtosis are between +1.5 and −1.5. Thus, parametric tests: independent sample $t$-test and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were computed as the data followed the normal distribution. To assess the strength of the correlation, Pearson Correlation Test was calculated.

## Results

In findings, Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception is written and shortened as (CRSEP) and Reading Strategy Use is written as (RSU). Descriptive statistics of the two scales are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

The total mean score, which is calculated for "Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception Scale" is (M=3.97, SD=0.49). The sub-scale with the highest mean score is Evaluation ($M^{Evaluation}$ = 4.07, $SD^{Evaluation}$ = 0.63). The sub-scale with the lowest mean score is Inference ($M^{Inference}$=3.84, $SD^{Inference}$ = 0.61).

The total mean score, which is also calculated for the "RSU Scale" is (M=3.68, SD=0.51). The sub-scale with the highest mean score is Assisting Strategies ($M^{AssistingStrategies}$ = 4.08, $SD^{AssistingStrategies}$ = 0.58). The sub-scale with the lowest mean score is Constructing Strategies ($M^{ConstructingStrategies}$=3.47, $SD^{ConstructingStrategies}$ = 0.73).

Table 1.
*Descriptive Statistics*

| Sub-Scale | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Inquiry | 255 | 3.92 | .56 |
| Inference | 255 | 3.84 | .61 |
| Analysis | 255 | 4.05 | .55 |
| Evaluation | 255 | 4.07 | .63 |
| Finding similarities and differences | 255 | 4.00 | .63 |
| CRSEP scale | 255 | 3.97 | .49 |

*Note*: CRSEP=Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception.

Table 2.
*Descriptive Statistics*

| Sub-Scale | N | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| Constructing strategies | 255 | 3.47 | .73 |
| Planning strategies | 255 | 3.57 | .66 |
| Management strategies | 255 | 3.87 | .74 |
| Assisting strategies | 255 | 4.08 | .58 |
| Visualization strategies | 255 | 3.51 | .91 |
| Self-regulation strategies | 255 | 3.67 | .87 |
| RSU scale | 255 | 3.68 | .51 |

*Note*: RSU=Reading strategy use.

## Analysis of the Research Question One

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of Gender

*T*-Test was utilized to determine whether there is a significant difference between participants' CRSEP according to gender.

The difference was not significant between the total scores of participants' CRSEP in terms of gender ($M^{Female}$ = 3.99, $M^{Male}$ = 3.95, t = 0.51; p > .05). Furthermore, scores of inquiry ($M^{Female}$ = 3.89, $M^{Male}$ = 3.97, t = −1.10, p > .05), inference ($M^{Female}$ = 3.85, $M^{Male}$ = 3.82, t = 0.30, p > .05), analysis ($M^{Female}$ = 4.08, $M^{Male}$ = 4.00, t = 1.15; p > .05), evaluation ($M^{Female}$ = 4.12, $M^{Male}$ = 3.97, t = 1.80; p > .05), and finding similarities and differences ($M^{Female}$ = 4.02, $M^{Male}$ = 3.97, t = 0.61; p > .05) are not statistically different in terms of gender (Table 3).

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of Department

*T*-Test was used to assess whether the difference is significant between participants' CRSEP in terms of department.

Table 4 shows that total scores of participants' CRSEP do not differ by department ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.94, $M^{Other}$ = 3.99, t = −0.79; p >

Table 3.
*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of Gender*

| Sub-Scale | Gender | N | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inquiry | Female | 158 | 3.89 | .56 | −1.10 | 253 | .27 |
| | Male | 97 | 3.97 | .55 | | | |
| Inference | Female | 158 | 3.85 | .63 | 0.30 | 253 | .76 |
| | Male | 97 | 3.82 | .60 | | | |
| Analysis | Female | 158 | 4.08 | .54 | 1.15 | 253 | .25 |
| | Male | 97 | 4.00 | .57 | | | |
| Evaluation | Female | 158 | 4.12 | .57 | 1.80 | 253 | .07 |
| | Male | 97 | 3.97 | .71 | | | |
| Finding similarities and differences | Female | 158 | 4.02 | .63 | 0.61 | 253 | .54 |
| | Male | 97 | 3.97 | .62 | | | |
| CRSEP scale | Female | 158 | 3.99 | .49 | 0.51 | 253 | .61 |
| | Male | 97 | 3.95 | .50 | | | |

*Note*: CRSEP=Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception.

Table 4.
*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of Department*

| Sub-Scale | Department | N | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inquiry | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.87 | .53 | −1.15 | 253 | .25 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.95 | .57 | | | |
| Inference | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.84 | .60 | 0.07 | 253 | .95 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.84 | .62 | | | |
| Analysis | English Language Teaching | 98 | 4.01 | .58 | −0.82 | 253 | .41 |
| | Other | 157 | 4.07 | .53 | | | |
| Evaluation | English Language Teaching | 98 | 4.06 | .63 | −0.19 | 253 | .85 |
| | Other | 157 | 4.07 | .63 | | | |
| Finding similarities and differences | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.96 | .65 | −0.90 | 253 | .37 |
| | Other | 157 | 4.03 | .61 | | | |
| CRSEP scale | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.94 | .49 | −0.79 | 253 | .43 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.99 | .50 | | | |

*Note*: CRESP=Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception.

.05). Additionally, scores of inquiry ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.87, $M^{Other}$ = 3.95, t = −1.15; p > .05), inference ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.84, $M^{Other}$ = 3.84, t = 0.07; p > .05), analysis ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 4.01, $M^{Other}$ = 4.07, t = −0.82, p > .05), evaluation ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 4.06, $M^{Other}$ = 4.07, t = −0.19; p > .05), and finding similarities and differences ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.96, $M^{Other}$ = 4.03, t = −0.90; p > .05) are not different in terms of department (Table 4).

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of How Often They Read English Texts

The one-way ANOVA was utilized here, and results are presented as follows:

The total scores of participants' CRSEP are significantly different in terms of how often they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.75, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.81, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 3.98, $M^{Often4}$ = 4.12, F = 5.03; p < .05). Learners that often do reading had higher CRSEP scores. And, there is a small effect of how frequently they read English texts on CRSEP ($\eta^2$ = .056). The difference is significant between the inquiry scores of participants depending on how often they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.59, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.76, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 3.93, $M^{Often4}$ = 4.06, F = 4.23; p < .05). Consequently, there is a small effect of how often they do reading in the target language on Inquiry ($\eta^2$ = .048).

Furthermore, the difference is significant between analysis scores of participants depending on how frequently they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.87, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.88, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 4.03, $M^{Often4}$ = 4.25, F = 5.27; p < .05). Thus, the role of the frequency of reading in analysis was assessed as small ($\eta^2$ = .059). The difference is also significant between evaluation scores of participants according to how often they do reading in English ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.75, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.9, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 4.09, $M^{Often4}$ = 4.21, F = 3.5; p < .05). Therefore, the role of how frequently they read texts in the target language in evaluation was determined as small ($\eta^2$ = .040). On the other hand, inference scores of participants are not different in terms of how often they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.88, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.69, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 3.84, $M^{Often4}$ = 3.94, F = 1.74; p > .05). Finally, participants' scores of finding the similarities and differences also differ by how often they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.78, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.79, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 4.04, $M^{Often4}$ = 4.13, F = 3.7; p < .05). As a consequence, there is a small effect of how often they read texts in the target language on finding the similarities and differences ($\eta^2$ = .041) (Table 5).

Table 5.

*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception in Terms of How Often They Read English Texts*

| Sub-scale | Frequency | N | M | SD | F | p | Between Group Difference | $\eta^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inquiry | Never1 | 10 | 3.59 | .49 | 4.23 | .01 | 4 > 2 | .048 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.76 | .57 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.93 | .51 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.06 | .58 | | | | |
| Inference | Never1 | 10 | 3.88 | .65 | 1.74 | .16 | | |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.69 | .6 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.84 | .61 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.94 | .61 | | | | |
| Analysis | Never1 | 10 | 3.87 | .59 | 5.27 | .00 | 4 > 2 | .059 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.88 | .49 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 4.03 | .56 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.25 | .52 | | | | |
| Evaluation | Never1 | 10 | 3.75 | .86 | 3.5 | .02 | 4 > 2 | .040 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.9 | .64 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 4.09 | .59 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.21 | .6 | | | | |
| Finding similarities and differences | Never1 | 10 | 3.78 | .88 | 3.7 | .01 | 4 > 2 | .041 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.79 | .62 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 4.04 | .57 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.13 | .65 | | | | |
| CRSEP scale | Never1 | 10 | 3.75 | .59 | 5.03 | .00 | 4 > 2 | .056 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.81 | .47 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.98 | .45 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.12 | .52 | | | | |

*Note*: CRSEP=Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception.

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of Gender

*T*-Test was conducted here in the analysis and results are presented as follows:

Based on results, total scores of participants' RSU are significantly different depending on gender ($M^{Female}$ = 3.73, $M^{Male}$ = 3.60, $t$ = 2.04; $p$ < .05). In addition, the scores of assisting strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 4.14, $M^{Male}$ = 3.99, $t$ = 2.03; $p$ < .05), visualization strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 3.67, $M^{Male}$ = 3.25, $t$ = 3.68; $p$ < .05), and self-regulation strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 3.76, $M^{Male}$ = 3.52, $t$ = 2.13; $p$ < .05) are significantly different in terms of gender. However, the difference was not significant between scores of constructing strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 3.44, $M^{Male}$ = 3.53, $t$ = −1.02; $p$ > .05), planning strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 3.58, $M^{Male}$ = 3.54, $t$ = 0.47, $p$ > .05), and management strategies ($M^{Female}$ = 3.94, $M^{Male}$ 3.75, $t$ = 1.93; $p$ > .05) in terms of gender (Table 6).

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of Department

*T*-Test was used to determine whether the difference is significant between participants' RSU in terms of department.

The difference was not significant between the total scores of participants' RSU in terms of department ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.71, $M^{Other}$ = 3.66, $t$ = −0.72; $p$ > .05). Scores of constructing strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.54, $M^{Other}$ = 3.43, $t$ = 1.18; $p$ > .05), planning strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.60, $M^{Other}$ = 3.55, $t$ = 0.65; $p$ > .05), management strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.87, $M^{Other}$ = 3.87, $t$ = 0.00, $p$ > .05), visualization strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.54, $M^{Other}$ = 3.49, $t$ = 0.38; $p$ > .05), assisting strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 4.08, $M^{Other}$ = 4.08, $t$ = −0.10; $p$ > .05), and self-regulation strategies ($M^{English Language Teaching}$ = 3.72, $M^{Other}$ = 3.64, $t$ = 0.70; $p$ > .05) do not significantly differ by department (Table 7).

Table 6.

*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of Gender*

| Sub-Scale | Gender | N | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constructing strategies | Female | 158.00 | 3.44 | .77 | −1.02 | 253.00 | .31 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.53 | .67 | | | |
| Planning strategies | Female | 158.00 | 3.58 | .60 | 0.47 | 253.00 | .64 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.54 | .75 | | | |
| Management strategies | Female | 158.00 | 3.94 | .72 | 1.93 | 253.00 | .06 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.75 | .76 | | | |
| Assisting strategies | Female | 158.00 | 4.14 | .54 | 2.03 | 253.00 | .04 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.99 | .63 | | | |
| Visualization strategies | Female | 158.00 | 3.67 | .85 | 3.68 | 253.00 | .00 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.25 | .95 | | | |
| Self-regulation strategies | Female | 158.00 | 3.76 | .83 | 2.13 | 253.00 | .03 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.52 | .92 | | | |
| RSU scale | Female | 158.00 | 3.73 | .48 | 2.04 | 253.00 | .04 |
| | Male | 97.00 | 3.60 | .53 | | | |

*Note*: RSU=Reading strategy use.

### English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of How Often They Read English Texts

The one-way ANOVA was conducted, and results are illustrated as follows:

Based on results in Table 8, total scores of participants' RSU significantly vary according to how frequently they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 3.29, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.51, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 3.7, $M^{Often4}$ = 3.84, $F$ = 6.64; $p$ < .05). Thus, learners who often and who sometimes read had higher RSU scores when compared to results of the students who never read. As a result, there is a small effect of how often EFL learners read target texts on the RSU ($\eta^2$ = .073).

Furthermore, constructing strategies scores of participants are statistically different in terms of how often they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1}$ = 2.92, $M^{Seldom2}$ = 3.26, $M^{Sometimes3}$ = 3.48, $M^{Often4}$ = 3.71, $F$ = 6.27; $p$ < .05). As participants often read, they had higher scores of constructing strategies than the scores of others. Eta squared score was

Table 7.

*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of Department*

| Sub-Scale | Department | N | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constructing strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.54 | .72 | 1.18 | 253 | .24 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.43 | .74 | | | |
| Planning strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.60 | .65 | 0.65 | 253 | .51 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.55 | .66 | | | |
| Management strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.87 | .72 | 0.00 | 253 | 1.00 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.87 | .75 | | | |
| Assisting strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 4.08 | .54 | −0.10 | 253 | .92 |
| | Other | 157 | 4.08 | .61 | | | |
| Visualization strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.54 | .89 | 0.38 | 253 | .70 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.49 | .92 | | | |
| Self-regulation strategies | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.72 | .87 | 0.70 | 253 | .48 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.64 | .87 | | | |
| RSU scale | English Language Teaching | 98 | 3.71 | .47 | 0.72 | 253 | .47 |
| | Other | 157 | 3.66 | .53 | | | |

*Note*: RSU=Reading strategy use.

Table 8.
*Analysis of English as a Foreign Language Learners' Reading Strategy Use in Terms of How Often They Read English Texts*

| Sub-Scale | Frequency | N | M | SD | F | p | Between Group Difference | $\eta^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constructing strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 2.92 | .87 | 6.27 | 0 | 4 > 2 | .069 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.26 | .66 | | | 4 > 1 | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.48 | .74 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.71 | .68 | | | | |
| Planning strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 3.37 | 0.69 | 2.62 | .05 | | |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.39 | 0.6 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.59 | 0.64 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.69 | 0.7 | | | | |
| Management strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 3.24 | 1.04 | 4.51 | 0 | 4 > 1 | .051 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.69 | 0.7 | | | 3 > 1 | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.94 | 0.71 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.98 | 0.72 | | | | |
| Assisting strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 3.65 | 0.76 | 5.3 | 0 | 4 > 1 | .059 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.97 | 0.52 | | | 4 > 2 | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 4.06 | 0.6 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 4.28 | 0.51 | | | | |
| Visualization strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 3.33 | 1.02 | 0.95 | .42 | | |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.36 | 0.71 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.53 | 0.95 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.61 | 0.95 | | | | |
| Self-regulation strategies | Never[1] | 10 | 3.3 | 0.88 | 2.38 | .07 | | |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.49 | 0.77 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.68 | 0.88 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.85 | 0.91 | | | | |
| RSU scale | Never[1] | 10 | 3.29 | 0.59 | 6.64 | .00 | 3 > 1 | .073 |
| | Seldom[2] | 54 | 3.51 | 0.4 | | | | |
| | Sometimes[3] | 123 | 3.7 | 0.51 | | | | |
| | Often[4] | 68 | 3.84 | 0.52 | | | | |

*Note*: RSU = reading strategy use.

determined as ($\eta^2 = .069$); that means there is a small effect of how often EFL learners read on the constructing strategies.

Their management strategies scores were also statistically different in terms of how frequently they do reading in the target language ($M^{Never1} = 3.24$, $M^{Seldom2} = 3.69$, $M^{Sometimes3} = 3.94$, $M^{Often4} = 3.98$, $F = 4.51$; $p < .05$). In comparison to EFL learners who never read, participants who often do reading had higher scores for management strategies. Additionally, management strategies scores of participants who sometimes do reading were also higher than those who never do reading. Thus, the role of the frequency of reading English texts in management strategies was assessed as small ($\eta^2 = .051$).

In addition, the difference is significant between assisting strategies scores in terms of the frequency of reading texts ($M^{Never1} = 3.65$, $M^{Seldom2} = 3.97$, $M^{Sometimes3} = 4.06$, $M^{Often4} = 4.28$, $F = 5.3$; $p < .05$). Contrary to EFL learners that seldom and that never read, learners that often read had higher assisting strategies scores. Therefore, the role of how often participants read texts in the target language in assisting strategies was assessed as small ($\eta^2 = 0.059$).

On the other hand, the scores of planning strategies ($M^{Never1} = 3.37$, $M^{Seldom2} = 3.39$, $M^{Sometimes3} = 3.59$, $M^{Often4} = 3.69$, $F = 2.62$; $p > .05$), visualization strategies ($M^{Never1} = 3.33$, $M^{Seldom2} = 3.36$, $M^{Sometimes3} = 3.53$, $M^{Often4} = 3.61$, $F = 0.95$; $p > .05$), and self-regulation strategies ($M^{Never1} = 3.3$, $M^{Seldom2} = 3.49$, $M^{Sometimes3} = 3.68$, $M^{Often4} = 3.85$, $F = 2.38$; $p > .05$) do not differ by how often these learners read English texts (Table 8).

**Analysis of the Research Question Two**

To assess whether there is a significant relationship between participants' CRSEP and their RSU, a correlational analysis was conducted, and Pearson correlation coefficients were computed.

As presented in Table 9, a medium positive significant correlation is seen between EFL learners' CRSEP and RSU ($r = .47$; $p < .01$). Additionally, a positive significant correlation is seen between the sub-scales of RSU and the sub-scales of CRSEP. The highest correlation is seen between EFL learners' CRSEP and inquiry ($r = .87$; $p < .01$). Analysis and CRSEP scores have a high positive significant correlation ($r = .86$; $p < .01$). A high positive significant correlation is also seen between planning and RSU ($r = .80$; $p < .01$). A medium positive significant correlation is seen between RSU and constructing strategies ($r = .68$; $p < .01$), and between analysis and inquiry ($r = .66$; $p < .01$). The correlation is medium positive significant between the scores of inquiry and RSU ($r = .42$; $p < .01$). The correlation is low positive significant between planning strategies and analysis ($r = .20$; $p < .01$), and between visualization strategies and inquiry ($r = .15$; $p < .05$). Finally, the lowest correlation is seen between visualization strategies and evaluation ($r = .14$; $p < .05$) in this study.

**Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

In this quantitative survey-based research, results show that total scores of EFL learners' CRSEP are not statistically different in terms of gender. Similarly, Öztürk et al. (2022) find that this difference was not significant in terms of gender in their study. Furthermore, the present study demonstrates that total scores of participants' CRSEP are not different in terms of department; hence, this may be related to learners' purposes of reading or what intention they have and the motive for which reading in English is done. Before entering the university, those EFL students, who ready themselves to get into ELT departments in Türkiye, may read English texts only to solve the questions in the university entrance exams. For that reason, before they focus on their majors in their future departments, both EFL learners from other

Table 9.
*Pearson Correlation Test*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inquiry (1) | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Inference (2) | .56** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Analysis (3) | .66** | .56** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Evaluation (4) | .63** | .58** | .73** | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Finding similarities and differences (5) | .60** | .57** | .62** | .71** | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| CRSEP scale (6) | .87** | .76** | .86** | .87** | .82** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Constructing (7) | .36** | .30** | .29** | .27** | .32** | .37** | 1 | | | | | | |
| Planning (8) | .28** | .28** | .20** | .18** | .21** | .28** | .47** | 1 | | | | | |
| Management (9) | .35** | .35** | .36** | .33** | .34** | .42** | .36** | .38** | 1 | | | | |
| Assisting (10) | .41** | .30** | .36** | .36** | .35** | .43** | .30** | .46** | .35** | 1 | | | |
| Visualization (11) | .15* | .256** | .17** | .14* | .15* | .20** | .30** | .47** | .39** | .36** | 1 | | |
| Self-regulation (12) | .24** | .20** | .24** | .23** | .23** | .28** | .28** | .34** | .25** | .33** | .36** | | |
| RSU scale (13) | .42** | .41** | .38** | .35** | .38** | .47** | .68** | .80** | .68** | .63** | .71** | .57** | 1 |

*Note*: CRSEP=Critical Reading Self-Efficacy Perception; RSU=Reading strategy use.
*$p < .05$.
**$p < .01$.

departments and from ELT departments have the same perceptions in their language education at the preparatory school.

In addition, CRSEP scores of participants were higher than those who seldom read because participants with higher scores often read English texts. Here, inquiry scores of participants were significantly different in terms of how frequently they do reading in the target language. That means they are able to make predictions about how the plot of the text they read will develop, and they can bridge gaps in a sentence meaningfully. Analysis scores of participants are also significantly different in terms of how frequently they do reading in the target language so participants that often read had higher Analysis scores than the others that seldom read. As they often read, they can understand the writer's aim. Evaluation scores of participants are also significantly different in terms of how frequently they read in the target language. Since they often read, evaluation scores of them were significantly higher than other participants that seldom read English texts. As participants often read, they can be better at considering and contemplating the connection between the person, place, and events that take place in a text in the target language. The difference was also significant between their finding similarities and differences scores according to how frequently they read. As those learners often read, they had higher scores than the others that seldom read. That is, they can make a decision about what is false and what is true about the source. However, inference scores of participants are not different in terms of how frequently they read. In a study, Olifant et al. (2020) also recommend that learners should read diversified texts that cover different subjects so that they can raise awareness about their CRSEP.

Additionally, the difference is significant between the total scores of RSU depending on gender. In light of Karatay's (2010) study, discernible gender-based differences were identified in the dimensions of planning, organizing, and assessing reading strategies alongside metacognitive awareness; that is, the study reveals the noteworthy findings about the strategies employed by female students. Gender's role was evident in various research investigations where discernible variations are seen in the levels of metacognitive awareness between female and male students (Akın & Çeçen, 2014; Bağçeci et al., 2011; Kana, 2014; Kaya & Fırat, 2011). Research studies conducted with EFL students have also shown similar results (Ateş, 2013; Tunca & Alkın-Şahin, 2014). However, the difference is not significant between EFL learners' scores of constructing, planning, and management strategies according to gender. Furthermore, the difference is significant between the scores of assisting, visualization, and self-regulation strategies in terms of gender. The difference is not significant

between the total scores of RSU of participants in terms of department. A study conducted by Yaylı (2010) shows that students that will study in different departments and the students who will study ELT in their future departments have the same levels in reading. This may also be explained that foreign language students, who ready themselves for ELT departments in Türkiye, read English texts or paragraph comprehension questions only to solve the questions in the university entrance exams before entering a university. After preparatory school, their use of reading strategies could vary in that they read academic articles or diversified texts when they get into their departments to focus on their majors. Similarly, in a study conducted with EFL students studying English at the school of foreign languages, Caner et al. (2021) find that the majors of students had no role in their RSU. On the other hand, Yukselir (2014) finds a significant difference in the use of reading strategies among EFL learners according to their respective academic departments. Regarding the result that is significant between the total scores of RSU, participants that often and sometimes read had higher scores in using these strategies than learners that never read. However, scores of planning, visualization, and self-regulation strategies are not significantly different in terms of how frequently EFL learners do reading in English. Additionally, constructing strategies scores differ by how frequently they read texts in the target language; that is, EFL students who read often had constructing strategies scores that were noticeably higher than those who seldom read and who never read. Management strategies scores of participants are significantly different in terms of how frequently they do reading. Management strategies scores of participants that sometimes read and that often read were noticeably higher than those that never read. Moreover, the result is significant between assisting strategies scores of participants depending on how often they read texts in the target language. Since they often read, assisting strategies scores of participants were statistically higher than others that seldom read and that never read.

In light of findings, a positive significant correlation is seen between two concepts in this present study. In a similar vein, Kökçü (2023) finds a significant correlation between participants' critical reading perceptions and their utilization of reading strategies. Moreover, a relationship was found between critical reading self-efficacy and motivating affective elements that influence language acquisition in general, and reading comprehension in particular (Ghonsooly & Elahi, 2010; Kargar & Zamanian, 2014). In Bozgun and Can's (2023) study, metacognitive reading strategies have a direct effect on critical reading self-efficacy of pre-service teachers studying at the faculty of education at a university. In a different study conducted with learners in the Faculty

of Education, Karadeniz (2015) finds a positive correlation between learners' self-perceptions of critical reading and their attitudes toward reading habits. In their study, Li and Wang (2010) find a strong relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and reading strategies use. With regard to the present study, as EFL learners employ sub-strategies more extensively in their reading practices, their perception of sub-dimensions of CRSEP also rises. Furthermore, the higher CRSEP of learners is, the higher their Inquiry is; thus, students' ability to ask questions and do inquiries can increase their CRSEP. Accordingly, they can question the writers' opinions and rationality and authenticity of the concepts underlying the origin of ideas in the target text. Additionally, when the degree of participants' CRSEP increases, analysis increases; that is, they can specify what makes the text particular and can draw inferences about the self of characters in the reading text. Reading strategies use and planning also have a high, positive, and significant relationship. That means, EFL students can scan the text to get the general idea, view it to determine the topic and determine goals in reading. As they enhance their utilization of reading strategies, there is a corresponding increase in their application of constructing strategies; that is, EFL learners can compare and contrast the information, and question their self and understanding about the text with the aim of self-evaluation. As the degree of participants' perception of inquiry increases, their perception of analysis increases. That is, their capacity to analyze increases as learners question the elements in a text. As participants' RSU increases, their Inquiry also increases, and thereby students' capacity for inquiring and questioning may improve or enhance as their use of reading strategies does.

Curriculum designers, instructors, and school administrators consider the relationship between these two concepts to effectively contribute to learners' reading. Reflective practices and constant questioning of reading texts should be employed in EFL classrooms. Additionally, extensive reading, which is conducted in non-school contexts for pleasure and fun, could positively affect learners in this current research in that the goal pursued in reading is to have information depending on one's own interests rather than to test to grade learners. Therefore, teachers, curriculum designers, and educators should seriously take into account the use of diverse foreign language materials in EFL learners' school and non-school life.

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