

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Belhadj Bouchaib University - Ain Temouchent



Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Social Sciences
Department of Letters and English Language

**Exploring Reading Strategies Effectiveness in Developing
EFL Students' Critical Thinking
The Case of Master 2 Students of Litterature and
Civilization**

**An extended essay submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for a
master's degree in didactics and applied languages**

Submitted by:

Hadil ABDELLAH

Zoulikha BENAISSA

Supervised by:

Dr. Amina KERKEB

Board of Examiners

President	Dr. Assia BOUZID	MAA	Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University
Supervisor	Dr . Amina KERKEB	MCA	Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University
Examiner	Dr. Amel MEBARKI	MCA	Belhadj Bouchaib Ain Temouchent University

Academic Year: 2023/2024

Dedications

To my beloved parents Father and Mother

To my sisters Sarah and Yousra who helped me find my smile. To those
who taught me that my efforts are truly worthwhile

To my beloved nieces Soudjoud and Wassim, your happiness fills my
heart with boundless love and joy, more than words could ever express.

To my childhood friend Ahlam, thank you for being with me in happy and
sad times.

Abdallah Hadil

Dedications

I dedicate this research work my beloved parents, who have always supported me unconditionally in my academic pursuits. I am forever grateful for your sacrifices, encouragement and understanding during the long hours of research, writing and revisions. Your love and dedication have inspired me to push myself beyond my limits.

Thank you for believing in me and for being my pillars of strength. I dedicate this work to you with all my heart and deepest gratitude.

This work is dedicated to my nearest and dearest sisters Amina and Nasrine have been a constant source of knowledge to me.

Benaissa Zoulika

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our academic supervisor **Dr.Amina KERKEB** it was an honour to work under her supervision as student. We had the pleasure of working with her and learning from her so much, for her kindness, guidance, and for answering all our questions.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Jury members **Dr.Assia BOUZID** as president and **Dr. Amel MEBARKI** as an examiner, for accepting to evaluate this dissertation.

We would like to acknowledge **Dr. Selma BELHAMIDI** and **Dr. Dalal BELARBI** for responding to our emails and for their help and insightful comments.

Special thanks go to **Ms. Zahera HASSAIENE**, for her effective and useful contribution to this research, and all EFL teachers of Literature and Civilization at Belhadje Bouchaib University for participant in this study.

Abstract

This research aims to explore how reading strategies contribute to the enhancement of learners' critical thinking skills in diverse educational contexts. Therefore, a mixed-methods approach was utilized through an online questionnaire sent to twenty-seven (27) EFL learners from the Department of Literature and Civilization at Belhadje Bouchaïb University. In addition, an online interview was administered to three (03) EFL teachers from the same department. The results indicate a positive correlation between the use of certain reading strategies and the development of critical thinking skills. Participants who reported having employed those strategies frequently demonstrated higher levels of analytical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: The ability of reading by Using Reading Strategies.....	7
Figure 1.2: Critical Thinking in Everyday Life.....	10
Figure 2.3: Mixed Method Research Designe Approach.....	18
Figure 3.1: Rating English Language Proficiency.....	23
Figure 3.2: Reading in English Language.....	24
Figure 3.3: Managing Reading in English.....	24
Figure 3.4: Reading as Thinking Process.....	25
Figure 3.5: Reading Enhances Critical Thinking.....	26
Figure 3.6: Critical Thinking Skills for Readers.....	26
Figure 3.7: Developing Critical Thinking through Reading Strategies.....	27
Figure 3.8: Improving Critical Thinking through Reading Strategies.....	28
Figure 3.9: Reading Strategies Foster Critical Thinking.....	29
Figure 3.10: Reading Strategies for Independent Thinkers.....	30

List of Abbreviations

CT: Critical Thinking.

CTS: Critical Thinking Skills.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

RS: Reading Strategies.

Table of Contents

Dedications	i
Acknowledgments	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Figures	v
List of Abbreviations	vi
Table of Contents	vii
General Introduction	1
Chapter One: Reading Strategies develop EFL Students’ Critical Thinking	
Section one: Reading Strategies	
1.1.1 Introduction.....	5
1.1.2 Relation between Reading and Litterature.....	5
1.1.3 Definition of Reading.....	5
1.1.4 EFL University Students‘ Challenges in Reading.....	6
1.1.5 Definition of Reading Strategies.....	7
1.1.6 Some of... ..	8
A. Predicting	8
B. Scanning	8
D. Skimming	9
E. Questioning	9
F. Summarizing	10
1.1.7 The Importance of Reading Strategies	11

Table of Contents

Section Two: Reading Strategies to enhance Critical Thinking

1.2.1 Relation between Reading Strategies and Critical Thinking	13
1.2.2 Defition of Critical Thinking.....	14
1.2.3 Characteristics of the Critical Thinkers.....	15
A. Curiosity.....	15
B. Objectivity.....	15
C. Introspection.....	15
D. Analytical thinking.....	16
E. Inference.....	16
F. Empathy and compassion	16
G. Creative thinking.....	16
H. Effective communicators.....	16
1.2.4 Barriers to CriticalThinking.....	16
A. Egocentrism.....	17
B. Self-serving Thinking.....	17
C. Self-serving Bias.....	17
D. Unwarranted Assumption and Sterotypes.....	17
E. Self-Focusing.....	18
F. Misundertanding What is meant by Criticism.....	18
1.2.5 The importances of Critical Thinking for EFL Learner.....	18
1.2.6 Developing Critical Thinking though Reading.....	19
Conclusion.....	20

Table of Contents

Chapter two: Research Methodology and Data Collection

2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 Research Methodology.....	22
2.3 The Sample and Population.....	23
2.4 Data Collection Tools.....	24
2.5 Description of Students' Questionnaire	25
2.6 Description of Teachers' Interview.....	25
Conclusion.....	27

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of The Results

3.1 Introduction.....	29
3.2 Analysis of the online questionnaire.....	29
3.3 Summary of the Results of Students'Questionnaire.....	37
3.4 Analysis and Results of Teachers'Interview.....	38
3.5 Summary of The Results Teacher's Interveiw.....	40
Conclusion.....	41

Chapter Four: Limitations, Pedagogical Implications, Suggestions and Recommendations.

4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Pedagogical Implications	43

Table of Contents

4.3 Limitations of the Study.....	44
4.4 Recommendations and Suggestions.....	44
Conclusion.....	46
General Conclusion.....	48
References.....	51
Appendices.....	

General Introduction

General Introduction

Reading is one of the primary skills students have to learn inside and outside classrooms. Therefore, At university EFL students have different reading materials, such as textbooks, articles, stories and so on. Reading is more beneficial to them during their studies because it enables them to acquire many things about the knowledge of the language and understand different subject areas. For these reasons, it is more important for EFL learners to have not only the ability to read written materials but also the ability to understand what they have read. By doing so, EFL learners are required to actively engage with the materials and make connections to their existing knowledge and experiences. They can hence develop their critical thinking skills, and enhance their overall ability to learn. That is why, the use of reading strategies is more important for learners to reach a deeper understanding and thinking when reading. In other words, the appropriate use of reading strategies will always facilitate the ability to get meaningful reading easily. Reading strategies include, for example, prediction, skimming, scanning, and summarizing which will enable EFL learners to develop their critical thinking in reading successfully without facing any problems. Most students at university can read, but unfortunately, they always encounter the problem of evaluating, analyzing, synthesizing, and deliberating facts and opinions while reading, because they are unable to think critically. That is why, the need to utilize certain effective reading strategies helps learners to enhance their abilities in thinking critically.

Therefore, in the present study, we will investigate how reading strategies influence EFL learners' critical thinking while reading, and based on this objective the following research questions are raised:

1. What are the most effective reading strategies that EFL students usually use?
2. How do reading strategies help EFL learners in enhancing their critical thinking?

In response to the above questions, the following hypotheses are advanced:

General Introduction

1. Students usually employ a combination of reading strategies, such as questioning, previewing text, summarizing information.
2. Enhancing critical thinking skills involves moving beyond the superficial aspects of the text, by selecting reading strategies that help learners to analyzing arguments, and placing information within a comprehensive framework.

To explore the connection between reading strategies and critical thinking development in EFL learners, this study employs a mixed-method design. Data will be collected through both quantitative and qualitative methods. These two approaches allow for a richer investigation. Quantitative data will be gathered through an online questionnaire distributed to a smaller sample of learners. This questionnaire aims to gather the frequency with which they employ different reading strategies and their self-perceived levels of critical thinking skills. In addition, and to gain deeper insights, the study includes an online interview that shifts focus to qualitative aspects, specifically exploring FEL teachers' perspectives on how reading strategies have influenced their learners' critical thinking development, a sample population will encompass both educators and learners, with three (03) English language teachers representing diverse modules and twenty-seven (27) Master Two students specializing in English Literature and Civilization.

The current research consists of four (04) main chapters: the first chapter deals with the theoretical background of the research topic. The second chapter concerns the practical side of the research work. The third chapter deals with data collection, analysis, and Presenting the results obtained. The fourth chapter discusses some of the recommendations and suggestions.

The first chapter dealt with two sections, the first section is entitled “**Reading Strategies,**” definitions of reading in general, and some of the challenges faced by learners of English as a foreign language, along with some concepts related to reading strategies as it is

General Introduction

the heart of the critical thinking process. This section concludes with the importance of reading strategies on the academic side. The second section focuses on the concept of “critical thinking“ and some characteristics of a critical thinker. In addition, it explains the most important barriers that are used to develop critical thinking. Finally, it highlights the importance of critical thinking among EFL learners and it shows the extent of the impact of reading strategies in improving and developing critical thinking among learners of English as a foreign language. The second chapter delves into the methodology used for the study and the data analysis process. It outlines the research method, population, sample, data collection tools (questionnaire and interview), and how the data was analyzed. Moreover the third chapter presents the analysis of teachers' interviews and students' questionnaires, summarizing the results obtained. It concludes with pedagogical implications, recommendations, suggestions, and limitations for improving the integration of critical thinking and effective reading strategies in English language learning.

Chapter One

Reading Strategies and Critical Thinking

Chapter One: Reading Strategies develop EFL Students' Critical Thinking

1.1.1 Section One: Reading Strategies

1.1.1	Introduction.....	5
1.1.2	Relation between Reading and Literature.....	5
1.1.3	Definition of Reading..... ;.....	5
1.1.4	EFL University Students' Challenges in Reading.....	6
1.1.5	Definition of Reading Strategies.....	7
1.1.6	Some of	8
	A. Predicting	8
	B. Scanning	8
	C. Skimming	9
	D. Questioning	9
	E. Summarizing	10
1.1.7	The Importance of Reading Strategies	11

1.2.1 Section two: Reading Strategies to Enhance Critical Thinking

1.2.1	Relation between Reading Strategies and Critical Thinking.....	13
1.2.2	Definition of Critical Thinking.....	14
1.2.3	Characteristics of The Critical Thinkers.....	15
	A. Curiosity.....	15
	B. Objectivity.....	15
	C. Introspection.....	15

D. Analytical thinking.....	16
E. Inference.....	16
F. Empathy and compassion	16
G.Creative thinking.....	16
H. Effective communicators.....	16
1.2.4. Barriers to Critical Thinking.....	16
A.Egocentrism.....	17
B. Self-serving Thinking.....	17
C. Self-serving Bias.....	17
D .Unwarranted Assumption and Sterotypes.....	17
E. Self-Focusing.....	18
F. Misundertanding What is meant by Criticism.....	18
1.2.5. The importances of Critical Thinking for EFL Learner.....	18
1.2.6 Developing Critical Thinking though Reading.....	19

1.1.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the theoretical framework and provides background about how reading strategies (RS) develop learners' critical thinking skills. It aims to introduce the research topic by defining the key concepts in this research work. The chapter is divided into two sections: the first section starts with a definition of reading and highlights some of the challenges that EFL learners may face and revolves around reading strategies. Additionally, it examines a range of reading strategies employed by EFL learners and describes their importance. The second section defines the concept of critical thinking and explains its characteristics and barriers. Furthermore, the chapter will describe the development of critical thinking skills through reading.

1.1.2 Relation between Reading and Literature

Reading skills are crucial for mastering a foreign language. Many teachers believe that the ability to read is essential for independent language learning. Reading provides students with authentic cultural contexts through literary texts, which can stimulate their critical thinking and lead to a deeper understanding of the language. Additionally, literature can serve as an engaging and enjoyable input that can motivate students to develop a lifelong reading habit. There is a relationship between reading and literature which means literature is an authentic pedagogical resource for language learning and intellectual development, while reading serves as the foundation for the creation of literary works.

1.1.3 Definition of Reading

Reading has been investigated by many scholars and researchers who tried to give a profound view of the concept of reading. There is more than one way to define reading it involves numerous items listed as follows:

According to Leu & Kinzer (1978) 'reading is a developmental interactive and global process involving learners skills the process specifically incorporates an individual's linguistic knowledge and can be both positively and negatively influenced by nonlinguistic internal and external variables for factors.' (Leu & Kinzer, 1978, p.9). This means that reading is a cognitive process and an integral part of language, it develops an individual's thinking of reaching the desired meaning, which can change according to factors and variables.

Reading is a complex interaction between the text and the reader (Hughes, 2007) In other words, the reader deciphers to build the meaning and extract it through prior knowledge and tribal experience because we cannot control it or limit it to one or two interpretations and that is what drives creativity and development of intellectual and linguistic culture and even knowledge of the individual. Burns (1999, P.45) states that "Reading is an interactive process, a process in which the reader engages in an exchange of ideas with another via the text" (Burns, 1999, p.45). This emphasizes that reading is a kind of dialogue or interaction between the reader and the text and reader selects the fewest cues from the text that are necessary to provide guesses and then confirm them, reading is therefore not a passive reception of meaning from the text, it is an active and interpretive process that makes use of interaction between the reader's knowledge and the text.

1.1.4 EFL University Students' Challenges in Reading

As English language learners, university students often face significant challenges with reading in English. This is due to a variety of factors, including insufficient linguistic knowledge and proficiency, a lack of understanding of the reading process, limited background knowledge, and a lack of exposure and practice in reading English. Developing effective reading skills is crucial, as it involves a range of sub-skills such as word recognition, vocabulary, grammar, text organization, reasoning, critical evaluation, and the flexible use of strategies. Beyond just understanding texts, EFL students also need to develop critical reading

skills to evaluate arguments, challenge assumptions, and connect content to their knowledge and perspectives. Overcoming these reading difficulties is essential for EFL students to achieve academic success and expand their language learning opportunities.

1.1.5 Definition of Reading Strategies

There are many different views about the definition of reading strategies depending on different scholars which is why there is no clear-cut definition.

Reading strategies are often used by learners as a way to overcome perceived difficulties or shortcomings in their comprehension or cognitive process of the text. Garner (1987) defines reading strategies as 'generally deliberate, playful activities undertaken by active learners, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure' (Garner, 198, p. 95).

In addition, effective reading involves purposeful mental operations and strategies that good readers utilize more extensively and competently than weaker readers as Pani (2004) mentions 'Reading strategies are the mental operation involved when readers approach a text effectively to make sense of what they read. Good readers apply more strategies more frequently and more effectively than poor readers' (Pan, 2004, p. 55).

Whereas, reading strategies can involve mental processes like making predictions and activating prior knowledge, as well as physical actions like taking notes or visualizing. Common examples include previewing, questioning, summarizing, making connections, and using text features. Effective readers are metacognitive, meaning they are aware of when they are using strategies and can adapt their strategy use based on the reading situation and purpose. The overarching goal of reading strategies is to enhance the reader's understanding, retention, and engagement with the text. Mc Namara (2007) views reading strategy as a 'cognitive or behavioral action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, to improve some aspect of comprehension' (Mc Namara, 2007, p.6).

1.1.6 Some of

Implementing effective reading strategies greatly enhances comprehension and critical thinking skills.

A. Predicting strategy

Decoda (2015) argues that Predicting belongs to a set of strategies called ‘Reciprocal Teaching or Collaborative Teaching’. It is about asking students to take information from a headline or title, a picture, a summary, or a chart then make an informed guess as to the ideas or concepts that might appear in a text. The predicting strategy activates students' background knowledge and starts engagement with key concepts. It activates background knowledge and shows students that they are smart enough to discover things even if they have trouble with reading.

In addition, making informed guesses about the text involves utilizing what you already know and clues from the text to make a judgment and predict what will happen next. This active reading strategy encourages engagement with the text, fostering a deeper understanding of the material. As Richardson (2010) mentions ‘makes informed guesses about the text. You use what you already know and clues (like text features) from the text to make a judgment and predict what will happen next. “ (Richardson, 2010, p.25).

B. Scanning

In scanning, instead of reading every word of a text, the reader searches for particular information. They achieve this by quickly looking through different parts of the text, such as the title, table of contents, headings, or any other prominent features. The goal of scanning is to locate specific details or key points without reading the entire text word by word. It's a useful strategy when you need to find particular information efficiently, such as when you're researching or trying to answer specific questions. According to Grellet (1981) ‘scanning is a

reading technique that requires the reader to search for specific information without reading the whole text, through looking at its title, table of contents and so on' (Grellet, 1981, p.58-59). Moreover, Scanning involves students searching for specific information within a text, such as dates, names, and places, among others. It is defined as the ability to quickly locate specific facts and details, which is considered a valuable reading skill. This skill is commonly taught in many developmental reading courses. Maxwell (2013) cites in Diaz and Laguadostated that 'scanning is when the students look for specific information within a text such as dates, names, and places, among others and to define as the ability to locate specific facts and details quickly, is regarded as a desirable reading skill and is taught in most development reading courses' (Maxwell, 2013, p.38).

C. Skimming

Skimming is a technique that enables the reader to cover a vast amount of material very rapidly. As Harmer (2007) argues that 'skimming is a skill where students cast their eyes over a surface to get a general idea of what is the topic about' (Harmer, 2007, p. 100). Students in this strategy are concentrating too hard on specifics only. Also, Brown (2000) mentions that 'skimming is a quick reading. The readers move rapidly across the text to reach and get the main idea'(Brown, 2000, p.308)

D. Questioning

Questioning is an important component of the teaching/learning process and it is embedded in quality instruction and strategic thinking. Questions are used to teach as well as to assess student understanding, and thus questioning plays a critical role in the overall success of a classroom. Blachowicz and Ogle (2008) argues that : 'Questioning is an important active thinking technique learners use while reading and trying to make sense of the text'(Blachowicz and Ogle, 2008, p.124).

E. Summarizing

It is the last strategy that can be used by readers, it requires the readers to organize or restate the information or the main ideas of a given text by his/her style after their comprehension or in other words, taking a lot of information and creating a condensed version that covers only the main points. Oxford (2006) defines 'summarizing as a short description of the main ideas or points without any details' (Oxford, 2006, p.717). Similarly, Reading Rockets Organization states 'Summarizing teaches students how to discern the most important ideas in a text, how to ignore irrelevant information, and how to integrate the central ideas in a meaningful way. Teaching students to summarize improves their cognitive ability about what is read'. This means that summarizing helps students develop skills in identifying the key ideas within a text, distinguishing them from less important details, and integrating these main ideas in a meaningful manner. By learning to summarize effectively, students improve their cognitive abilities, particularly in terms of comprehension and retention of the material they read. In essence, summarizing is presented as a valuable strategy for enhancing students' understanding and engagement with the content they encounter.

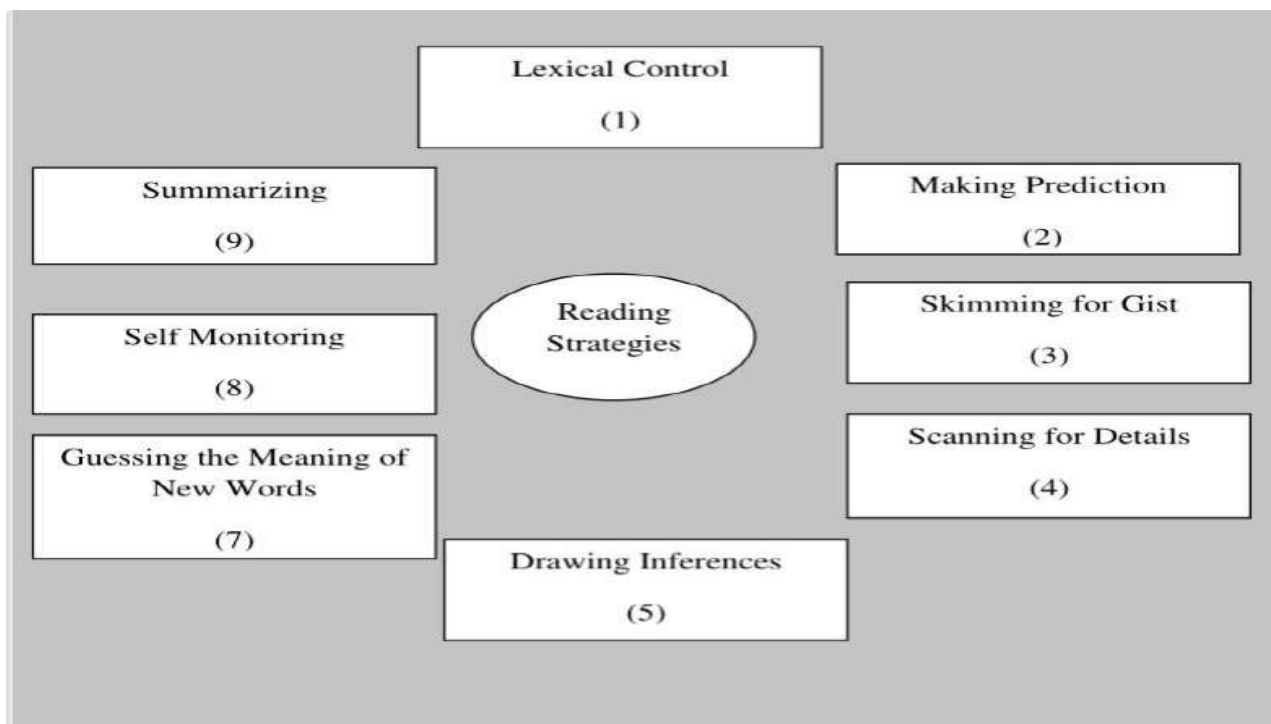


Figure 1.1: The ability of Reading by Using Reading Strategies (Rumptz (2009). In Rouai, 2014, p.14)

1.1.7 The Importance of Reading Strategies

In the educational system, most EFL learners face many problems especially in comprehension of written materials when reading. According to them, understanding the meaning of texts can be a great challenge; For that reason, Many researchers affirm that using some reading strategies helps learners to overcome their reading problems. They view that learners who use reading strategies are more motivated and comprehended than those who do not. According to McNamara (2009) 'strategy instruction is particularly needed and effective for those students who are struggling most, namely those with less domain knowledge or lower reading skills' (McNamara, 2009). In other words, strategy instruction, is very important, especially for students facing difficulties, particularly those with limited domain knowledge or lower reading skills.

McLaughlin and Allen (2002) assumes that 'good readers use comprehension strategies to facilitate the construction of meaning. These strategies include previewing, self-questioning, making connections, visualizing, knowing how words work, monitoring, summarizing, and evaluating. Researchers believe that using such strategies helps students become metacognitive readers'

To sum up, Readers need to use certain reading strategies while reading a text, an article, or any kind of written passage and know how to apply them appropriately and successfully to become efficient readers.

1.2.1 Relation between reading and Critical Thinking

Critical thinking (CT) which refers to a higher-order that questions assumptions is one of the main learning objectives in the new curriculum. This involves skills like observing, interpreting, analyzing, making inferences, evaluating, explaining, and reflecting on one's thinking process. Activities that develop knowledge, listening, reading, speaking, and writing can foster a person's ability to think in multiple dimensions and at a higher level. Reading, in particular, offers opportunities to use critical thinking. Therefore, understanding the relationship between reading strategies and critical thinking is crucial.

Intellectual individual can think critically. It's constantly perceives and thinks. Individuals who cannot use critical thinking are not open to new perspectives and cannot look at events, situations, and people from a different angle. Moreover, reading is the most effective means of information improving one's thinking skills. Today, it is not enough to teach reading and help students have a reading habit to be involved in the information society. When it is considered that comprehending what you read is important in every part of daily life. The teaching of reading should be done more deliberately and strategically. Recent views on reading processes show that using reading strategies is effective. Strategy is a plan to reach the learning outcomes. Students having metacognitive skills are observed to be aware of their learning styles and these students are the ones who can use strategies. These strategies used during the reading activity foster critical thinking.

1.2.2 Definition of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking has been a controversial issue among philosophers, researchers and educators although there is no consensus on a definition.

Critical thinking is the process of engaging in accurate and logical reasoning to obtain dependable knowledge about the world. Another way to characterize it is as thoughtful, contemplative, accountable, and adept thinking that centers on determining what to believe or how to act. Schaferman(1991, p, 22) described as'.. Correct thinking in the pursuit of relevant and reliable knowledge about the world. Another way to describe it is reasonable, reflective, responsible, and skillful thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do'. Moreover, Thinking critically serves as a shield against an inundation of information and persuasions from various sources. However, it signifies more than that; Reasoning is the trait that sets us apart from animals. Unlike beasts, humans can strategize, engage in thorough deliberation, and partake in discussions aimed at achieving comprehension. As explains by Epstein and Kernberger (2006)'Thinking critically is a defense against a world of too much information and too many people trying to convince us. However, it is more; Reasoning is what distinguishes us from beasts. They cannot plan, they cannot think through, they cannot discuss in the hopes of understanding'(Epstein and Kernberger, 2006, p.22). Even more, Moon (2008) claims that 'Critical thinking is the analysis of a situation based on facts and evidence to be able to make a judgment or come to a conclusion, taking into account empathy, culture, and history' (Moon, 2008, p.30). Accordingly, it is commonly assumed today that the essence of critical thinking lies in thinkers' capability to assume control over their thought processes. This necessitates the development of reliable criteria and standards for evaluating and scrutinizing their thinking and consistently applying these benchmarks to enhance their caliber. Elder and Paul (1994) state that 'critical thinking is best understood as the ability of thinkers to take charge of their thinking'.(Elder and Paul, 1994, p.34-35). This requires that they develop sound criteria and standards for analyzing and assessing their thinking and routinely use those criteria and standards to improve its quality.



Figure 1.1: Critical Thinking in everyday life (Paul and Elder (2002), in Bouaoun, 2020, p. 07)

1.2.3 Characteristics of Critical Thinkers

Patel (2018) argued that critical thinkers shape several traits such as:

A. Curiosity: curiosity is a core trait of many successful leaders. Being interested in the world and people around you is a hallmark of leaders who are critical thinkers. Is a quality related to inquisitive thinking such as exploration, investigation, and learning, evident in humans and animals. Curiosity helps humans development, from which derives the process of learning and desire to acquire knowledge and skill.

B. Objectivity: objective thinkers seek to keep their emotions from affecting their judgment.

Good critical thinkers can stay as objective as possible when looking at information or situations. Objective thinkers tend not to be aggressive. Here are some keywords people use to describe an objective thinkers: Quiet; dependable; modest; conservative; realistic; controlled; conventional

Logical; Factual

C. Introspection : the art of being aware of your thoughts ; critical thinkers need introspection so they are aware of their degree of alertness and attentiveness, as well as their biases. Introspection is closely related to self-reflection, which gives insights into emotional and mental states.

D. Analytical Thinking: the ability to analyze information is key when looking at almost anything, whether it is a contract, report, business model or even a relationship. Analysis relies on observation to gather and evaluate evidence so you can come to a meaningful conclusion.

E. Inference: inference is the ability to extrapolate meaning from data and discover potential outcomes when assessing a scenario. Critical thinkers need to assess the information and draw conclusions based on raw data. Because; Information does not always come with a summary that spells out exactly what it means.

F. Empathy and Compassion: The point of having compassion is to have concern for others and to value the welfare of other people Without compassion, we would view all information and situations from the viewpoint of cold, and heartless. A good critical thinker must always take into account the human element.

G. Creative Thinking: is important to bring in new ideas. Creative thinkers reject standardized formats for problem-solving and think outside the box. They have a wide range of interests and adopt multiple perspectives on a problem.

H. Effective Communicators: Effective Communication starts with a clear thought process. An effective critical thinker must be able to relay his/her ideas compellingly and then absorb the responses of others.

To sum up, a critical thinker is someone who can use different critical thinking skills and sub-skills successfully and appropriately. However, to be such kind of thinker, one should be first aware of the existence of this skill, and then he should work on developing it.

1.2.4 Barriers to Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an important skill that people need to develop. Its importance ranges from personal life to professional and educational domains. However, different

Obstacles hinder reaching that aim i.e. to be a critical thinker is not an easy task. Bassham et al. (2011) different hindrances of CT.

A. Egocentrism

This obstacle is associated with the tendency to see as centered and based only on oneself. Thus, Egocentrics are those who tend to prioritize their interests, points of view and beliefs as being true and better than those of others. This kind of people is likely to be subjective, prejudiced and biased. Egocentrism is of two types :

B. Self-interested Thinking

It refers to the tendency to accept and support only those beliefs and arguments that serve One's self-interest. Therefore, self-interested thinkers are narrow-minded in the sense that they see reality from what interests them and go hand in hand with their own beliefs and opinions.

Their reasoning is based on the idea that what serves and benefits one's self is true and good. This kind of thinking is a major obstacle to critical thinking because being a critical thinker means having the ability to reason logically and selflessly.

C. Self-serving bias

It is the tendency to overestimate or value oneself, and to perceive oneself as superior to others. In other words, it is to see yourself better than what you are. Although it is good to value oneself, being overconfident may negatively affect one's objectivity, because, it makes people rigid, and less likely to improve and recognize their strengths and weaknesses.

D. Unwarranted Assumptions and Stereotypes

An unwarranted assumption is to believe that something is true without reasonable or logical evidence. In other words, it is to believe in things without any attempt to check their reliability and validity. Among its types is a stereotype, which refers to the tendency to form opinions based on particularities rather i.e. to generate things based on a small minority. As a

Result, such kind of assumption hinders critical thinking because it is based on unreasonable, unanalytical and irrational arguments and beliefs.

E. Self-focusing

Human beings tend to think only about their needs and benefits. However, to be a critical thinker someone needs to avoid such a tendency and try to understand others' views and opinions that are different from one's self.

F. Misunderstanding What Is Meant by Criticism

Certain people think that criticism is mainly about stating negative aspects, as a result, they fail to make accurate analyses when they are required to do so, as they are not aware that Criticism is both negative and positive.

1.2.5 The Importance of Critical Thinking for EFL Learners

Critical thinking is one of the most vital aspects of knowledge. Its applicability spans from the classroom to nearly every other aspect of human life. From solving problems in class to facing real-world situations, critical thinking is a crucial skill that every student should endeavor to master (Miller, 2005). For this reason, practitioners should be more effective by promoting critical thinking aspects in the classroom by engaging the learners in authentic reading contexts. This works well by designing materials that encourage them to think creatively and critically. Thus, learners will be able to monitor their learning reflectively and make connections in and outside the EFL reading class. To sum up, Critical thinking is an essential tool for EFL learners for it paves the way to take critical actions and enhance learning strategies. Furthermore, it makes learners think for themselves and become autonomous.

1.2.6 Developing Critical Thinking Skills through Reading

Critical thinking is a mental process that requires the use of different cognitive and metacognitive skills when dealing with a particular piece of information. This skill, however, is not innate. In other words, human beings are not born with the ability to think critically.

Reading is both a thinking and a cognitive process. Thus, Reichl(2009) states that "... not an isolable skill in itself but is based on more general thinking abilities that are an integral part of all cognitive activity" (Reichl, 2009, p. 33). Moreover, it implies that while reading, the reader is using some critical thinking skills and sub-skills. As a result, it seems that there is a relationship between reading and critical thinking. In other words, reading can be used as a tool to foster critical thinking skills.

King (2011) claims that reading is a tool to enhance critical thinking, because, as readers read they tend to develop certain ideas and concepts that are the core of all thinking manners. Moreover, the process of thinking is related to the knowledge of semantics, which allows the person to be aware of and critically analyze the aim of the language used by both writers and speakers i.e. whether it is used to inform, convince, influence, etc. Additionally, she proposes the essential steps of how critical thinking can be fostered through reading. To reach such a goal, she emphasizes that the materials selected in the curriculum should be objectively directed, students' ideas should be welcomed and respected, and the teaching strategies should be planned to develop students' thinking.

Finally, critical thinking is one of several learning and innovation skills that are necessary to prepare students in the field of education and in the workplace. Thinking critically is an ability that helps to think in an appropriate, rational, and logical manner. That is, critical thinking is needed in every domain of life.

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter starts with an exploration of different definitions of reading skills, and reading strategies and mentions some of the effective reading strategies. It also examined the concept of critical thinking, the characteristics of the critical thinker, and its barriers. The use of reading strategies has a great role in promoting students' critical thinking that is why; The more students dig into practicing reading the more their thinking evolves and the more they become critical thinkers because real reading involves deeper thinking that leads to real discussing and analyzing. Overall, it can be deduced that using reading strategies as a technique is very effective at enhancing EFL learners' critical thinking.

Chapter Two

Research Methodology and Data Collection

Chapter Two Research Methodology and Data Collection

2.1 Introduction.....	22
2.2 Research Methodology.....	22
2.3 The Sample and Population.....	23
2.4 Data Collection Tools.....	24
2.5 Description of Students' Questionnaire	25
2.6 Description of Teachers' Interview.....	25
Conclusion.....	27

2.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as the foundation of the research, outlining the methodology employed to investigate critical thinking development strategies for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. Specifically, it details the steps taken to identify the most effective strategies used by students in the Department of English Language at Ain Temouchent University, Belhaj Bouchaib. The chapter unfolds in a logical sequence, first addressing the research design and method, followed by a description of the investigation context and participant sample. Subsequently, it explains the data collection tools and procedures used during the research. Finally, the chapter concludes by outlining the data analysis methods and addressing the data's validity and reliability.

2.2 Research Methodology

This study aims to identify the role of reading strategies in developing critical thinking for learners of English as a foreign language. To this end, a mixed method is used to analyze data in this research work: qualitative through an interview administered to (03) teachers and a questionnaire for students. The questionnaire aims to identify students' attitudes toward reading strategies that develop critical thinking. It was distributed to 27 students of the second-year master of literature. In addition, the interview aims to know the teachers' opinions about the use of reading strategies to improve students' critical thinking skills. Interviewing teachers aims to discover effective reading strategies that enhance students' critical thinking skills by exploring educators' methods.

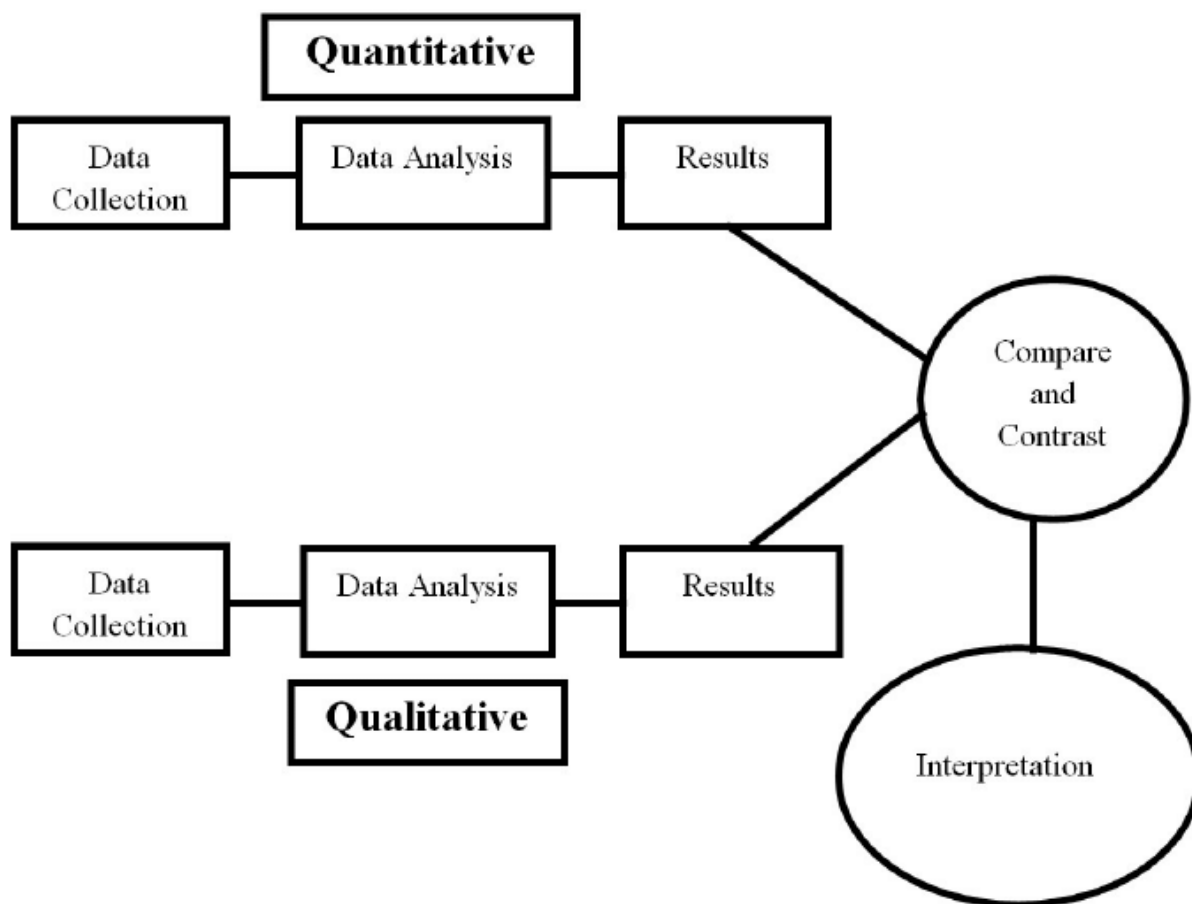


Figure 2.2: Mixed Method Research Design Approach (Creswell(2012). In Opoku and Vian, 2013, p.135)

2.3 The Sample and Population

Sampling stands as a fundamental pillar in educational research, where the quality of the study hinges not only on the chosen research methods or tools but also on the appropriateness of the sampling process. Essentially, a sample denotes a subset of a larger population, representing the portion selected for examination. In quantitative inquiries, critical inquiries emerge concerning sample criteria: its representativeness, suitability, and capacity for generalization. An effective sample should adequately mirror the entire population to enable extrapolation of findings.

In exploring reading strategies to develop EFL learners' critical thinking, the researcher embarked on a case study within the Department of Literature and Civilization at Belhadj Bouchaib University during the 2023-2024 academic year. This sample comprises twenty-seven (27) EFL learners, and three (03) EFL teachers. The selection of this particular sample for the study was guided by several criteria. Firstly, all teachers involved are Algerian EFL educators. Secondly, accessibility for the researcher was a key consideration, ensuring ease of interaction with both teachers and learners regarding the research focus and objectives.

2.4 Data Collection Tools

A pivotal stage in any research endeavor involves careful data collection. This process entails the systematic collection and measurement of information related to a particular phenomenon or variable(s) within scientific research. The use of different tools such as questionnaires, interviews and observations facilitates this data collection process. The choice of these tools depends on the unique nature of the research problem and its objectives. In this particular study, the researcher chose to use two distinct data collection methods: an online questionnaire and an online interview. They were chosen to delve deeper into understanding the basic strategies used to promote critical thinking .

The researcher adopted the two data collection tools to ensure comprehensive insights and diverse perspectives on this research. The online questionnaire was conducted on English language learners in the Department of Literature and Civilization, while the online interview targeted English language teachers in the same academic department.

2.5 Description of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire utilized in this study aimed to examine the impact of reading strategies on enhancing learners' critical thinking skills. The survey contained a total of 11 questions, including both closed-ended and open-ended items. The questionnaire consisted of multiple-choice questions, each focusing on different aspects related to reading strategies and critical thinking.

The closed-ended questions utilized a Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree to assess the participant's agreement with statements related to reading strategies and critical thinking skills.

The open-ended questions utilized allowed participants to provide more detailed responses and insights into their experiences with reading strategies and critical thinking. The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the relationships between reading strategies and critical thinking skills in EFL learners.

2.6 Description of Teachers' Interview

A total of three teachers were asked to answer seven open-ended questions about their perception of the role of reading strategies in EFL learning to develop students' critical thinking. The interview was conducted with (03) teachers of literature in the Department of English.

Question 01: How many years have you been teaching in the department of English?

Asking this question to gauge their level of experience and expertise in this field. This information can be relevant when considering a teacher's qualifications, teaching style, familiarity with the curriculum, and student needs.

Question 02: How do you motivate students to learn through reading?

Teachers have experience and expertise in classroom management, student engagement and academic instruction and can provide valuable advice on techniques that

have been successful in their teaching practice. By learning from their perspective the student can gather a range of ideas and approaches that can be implemented to cultivate a love for reading in students .Improve their reading skills and enhance their overall learning experience.

Question 03: What teaching strategies and techniques have you already tried?

By understanding what strategies they have used in the past we can gauge their ability to adapt and change their teaching methods based on the needs of different students and learning environments this information can also guide us in providing appropriate professional development opportunities to enhance their teaching skills and effectiveness in the future.

Question 04: What specific reading strategies do you find effective for promoting critical thinking among EFL learners?

Allows us to learn about the different techniques they use to enhance students' critical thinking abilities. It can provide us with valuable insights into instructional methods, lesson planning and classroom activities that have proven successful in developing critical thinking skills (CTS).

Question 05: Have you noticed any differences in the development of critical thinking skills between EFL learners who engage in reading strategies compared to those who do not ?

When asking this question to teachers, it is important to gather their observations and insight on the development of critical thinking skills in EFL learners. By comparing the progress of EFL learners who actively engage in reading strategies with those who do not, teachers can identify potential differences in the development of critical thinking skills

Question 06: How can EFL teachers encourage students to apply reading strategies independently and transfer critical thinking skills to other academic areas?

Asking this question to EFL teachers can provide insights into effective methods and techniques they use to encourage students to independently apply reading strategies and transfer critical thinking skills to other academic areas. By gaining knowledge from experienced teachers, educators can gather valuable strategies and approaches to implement in their classrooms. It also allows for the sharing of best practices and encourages collaboration among teachers to enhance students' reading skills and critical thinking abilities across subjects.

Conclusion

This chapter lays the groundwork for the research, outlining the methodology employed to investigate effective critical thinking development strategies for English language learners. It details the research design, investigation context, participant sample, data collection tools, and procedures used in this case study. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the chapter addresses the data's validity and reliability. Finally, it delves into the specific methodology used to explore strategies that foster critical thinking skills in learners. The subsequent chapter will shift focus to analyzing, interpreting, and discussing the data collected through this methodology.

Chapter Three

Data Analysis and Discussion of The Results

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Discussion of The Results

3.1 Introduction	29
3.2 Analysis of the Online questionnaire.....	29
3.3 Summary of The Results of Students' Questionnaire.....	37
3.4 Analysis and Results of Teachers' Interview.....	38
3.5 Summary of The Results Teacher's Interview.....	40
Conclusion.....	41

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and interprets the data collected from the two data collection tools, namely the online questionnaire and the online interview. First, quantitative data are analyzed and presented in figures. The qualitative data is then quantitative analyzed and transcribed verbatim. The first part presents and discusses the results of the online questionnaire taken by twenty-seven (27) learners of English as a foreign language in the Department of Literature and Civilization at Belhaj Bouchaib University. In the second part, the results of the online interviews conducted by three (03) teachers of the same Department are presented and discussed. Then the third part was devoted to discussing and interpreting the most important findings of the research.

3.2 Analysis of The online Questionnaire

This section provides an analysis of the results of the previously described questions.

This questionnaire is semi-structured and consists of twelve questions.

Question 01: In general, how would you rate your English language proficiency ?

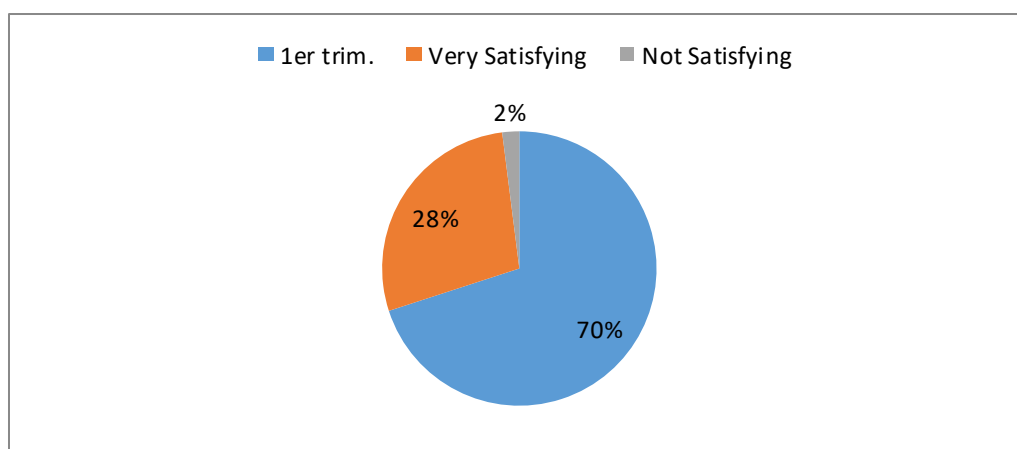


Figure 3.1 : Rating English language proficiency.

Question 02: Do you read in English?

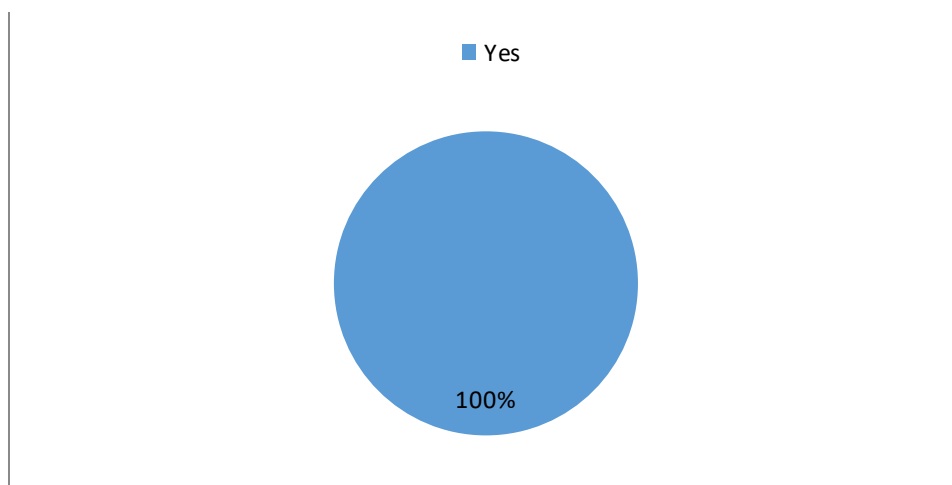


Figure3.2 : Reading in English language

The graph shows that all students are treasuring reading.

Question 03: How do you manage reading in English?

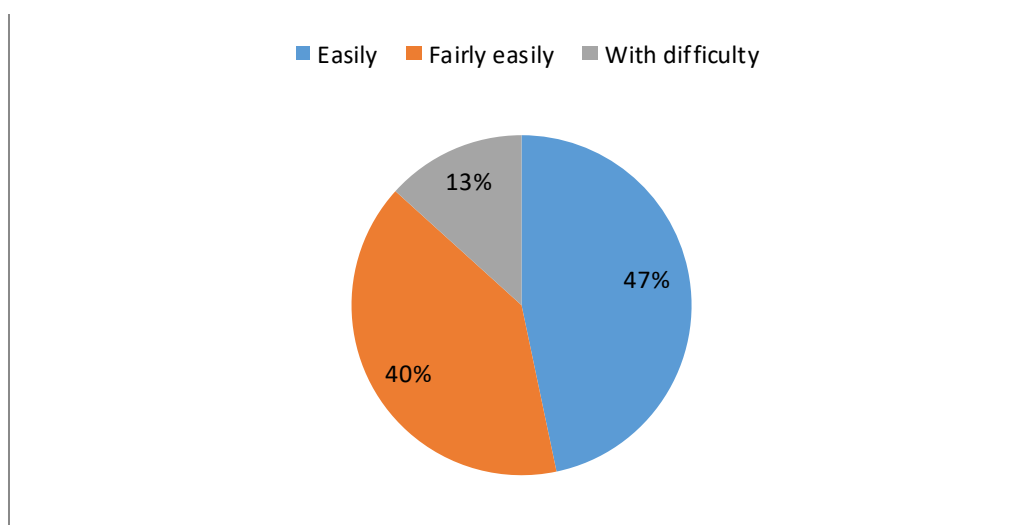


Figure3.3 : Managing reading in English languag

According to the graphic (46,7%) of students read in English easily and (40%)read fairly easily while a few of them read with difficulty(13,3%),this implies that the participants do consider reading as one of their primary prefernces.

Question 04: To what extent do you agree that reading is a thinking process?

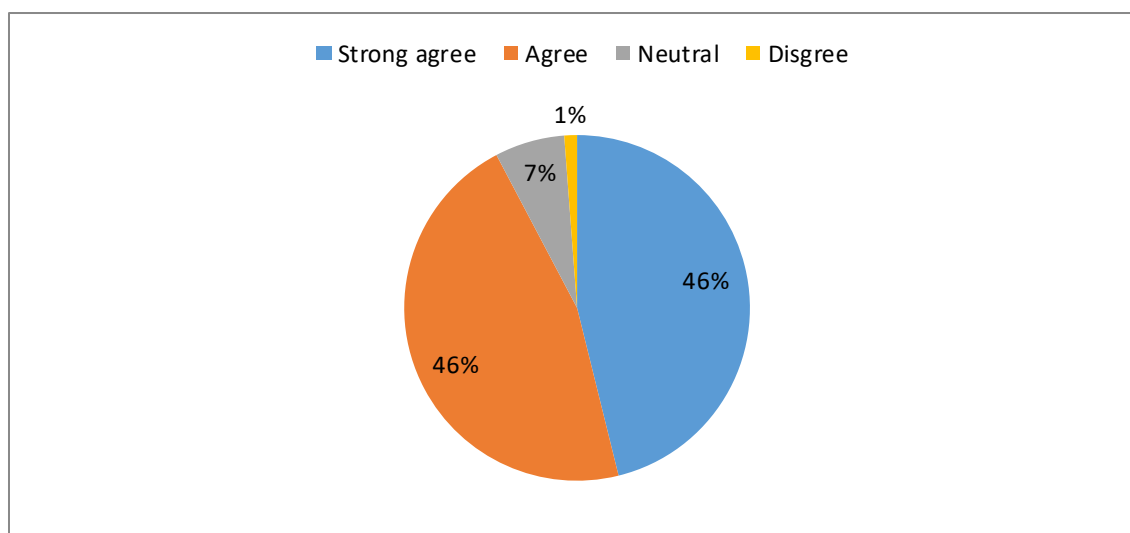


Figure 3.4: Reading as thinking process

According to the results displayed in graphics (46,7%) of the respondents strongly agreed that reading is a thinking process, which requires the use of cognitive skills .Moreover, (46,7%)agreed about that this implies that they are aware of the fact that reading is an active process that involves the use of cognition.Only (6,6%)of the participants chose to not express their opinions about the assumption that reading is a thinking process.

Question 05: Do you think that critical thinking skills can be enhanced through reading ?

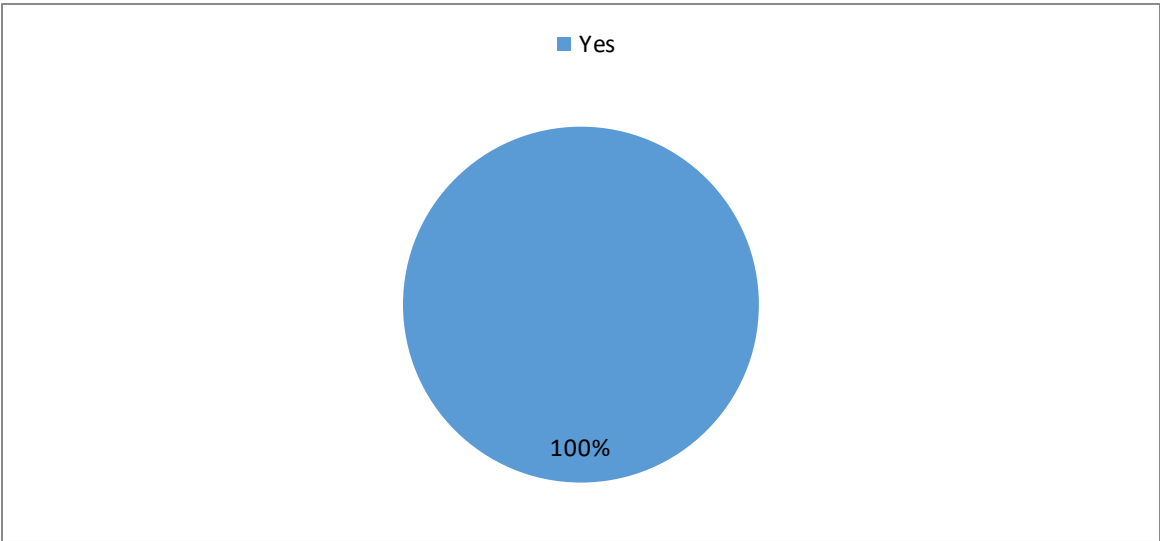


Figure 3.5: Reading enhances critical thinking

The results show that (100%) of the respondents agree that critical thinking can be enhanced through reading. This would appear to indicate that learners are aware of the significance of critical thinking, especially, as advanced learners who are most of time, required to use their faces during their studies.

Question 06: How do you critically think when you read?

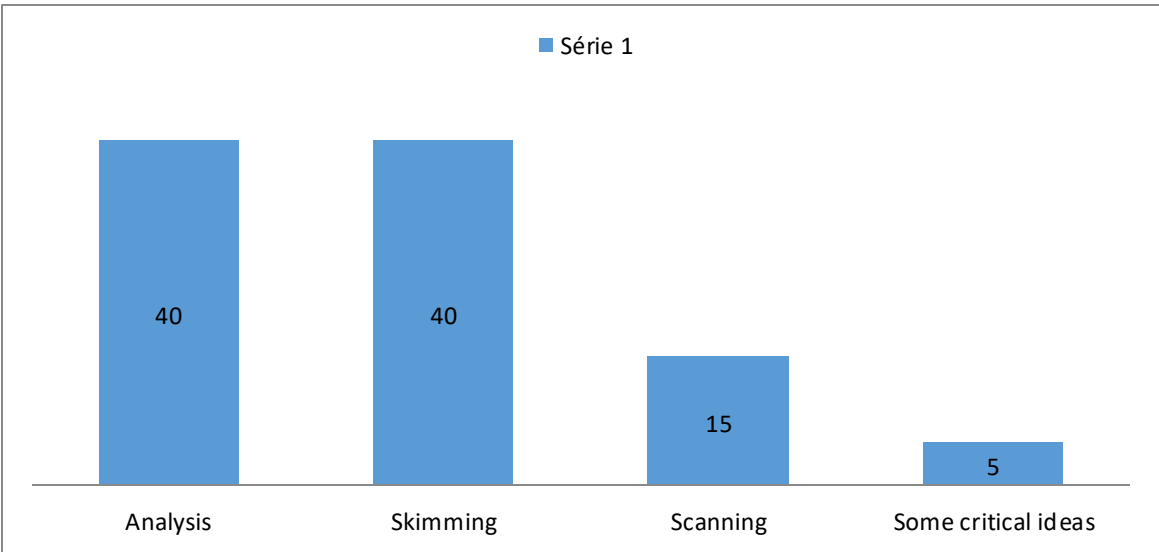


Figure 3.6: Critical Thinking Skills for Readers

Responses show approximate value as it is seen students indicated that when they do not understand a particular material or text they depend on the analyzing strategy they analyze to simplify the process of grasping the meaning of the reading content. Nearly the same thing was adopted to the skimming strategy moreover, some responses opted for the evaluating and scanning strategy, and only a few of the participants used critical thinking ideas to deal with texts, the results of this question demonstrated that the reading strategies skimming and deep reading and analysis are the most used ones may be because are easy to apply in contrast to other strategies.

Question 07: Which of the following reading strategies can help develop critical thinking skills ?

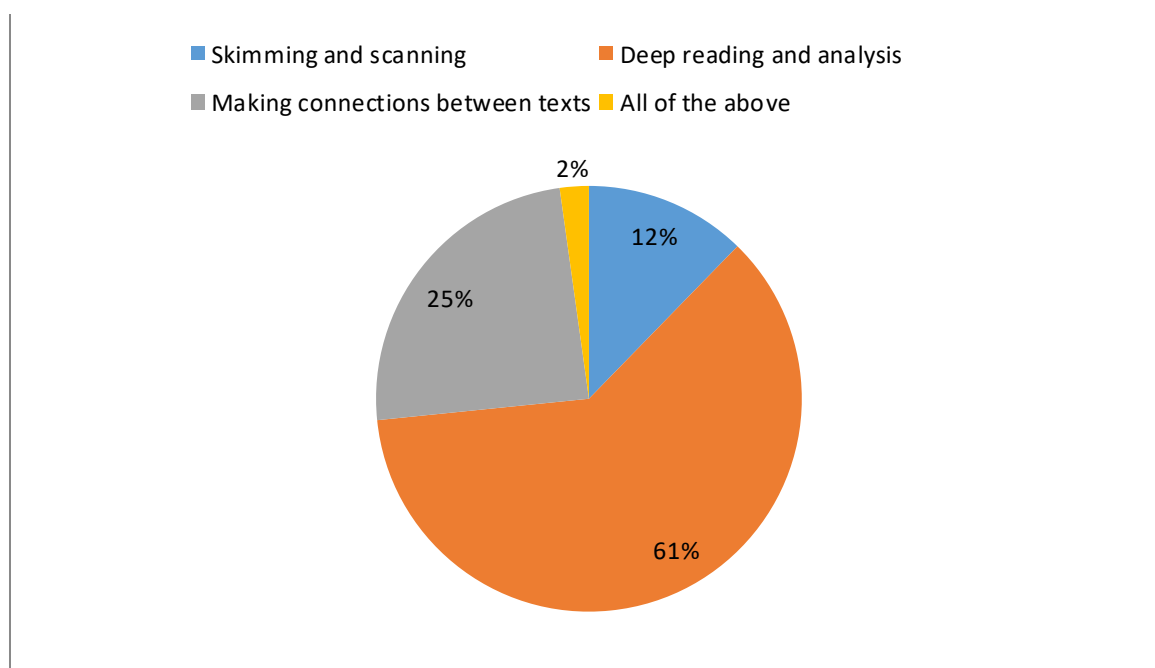


Figure 3.7: Develop critical thinking through reading strategies

As the graphic shows (61%) tend to read deeply and analyze a particular material, while (25%) of the respondents indicated that they tend to make connections between texts during the reading process. Only (12%) of them reported that they skim and scan the value of

The content they are reading. However, (2%) of the respondents stated that when they read a particular material they just tend to use all of the above reading strategies.

The above results indicate that the respondents used the majority of the given reading strategies. learners used analyzing, skimming and scanning more than the other strategies, because these strategies (summarizing and questioning...) mainly take place only if the reader is required to do so.

Question 08: How can using reading strategies lead to improved critical thinking in learners ?

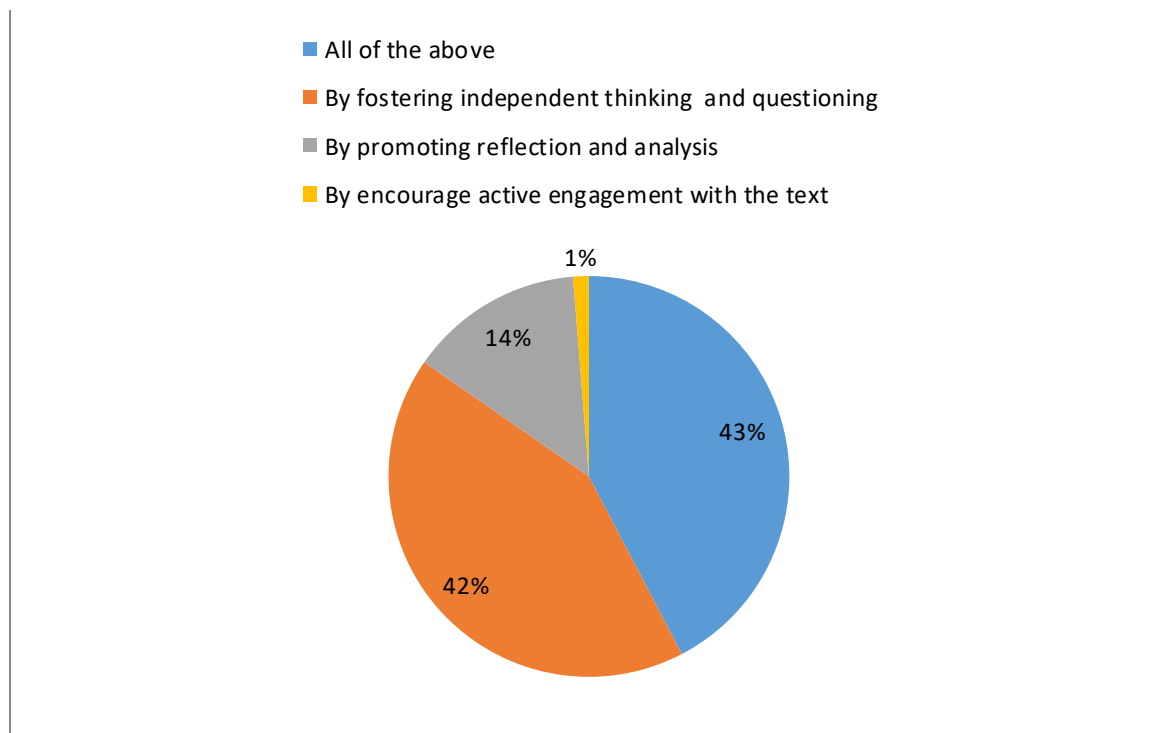


Figure 3.8: Improving critical thinking through reading

The graphic shows that (42%) out of the total respondents agree that by fostering independent thinking and questioning they can improve critical thinking in learners and the

same thinking with the learners who choose to use all these strategies to improve their critical thinking, and only some of them (14%) choose to promote reflection and analysis but a few of them (1%) prefer to choose encouraging active engagement with the texts. The results of this question demonstrated that fostering independent thinking and questioning helps students to be better readers in the future and be able to have the ability to think clearly and rationally, to understand the evidence presented to them, and to form their judgments.

Question09: In your opinion, how important are reading strategies in fostering critical thinking skills in learners ?

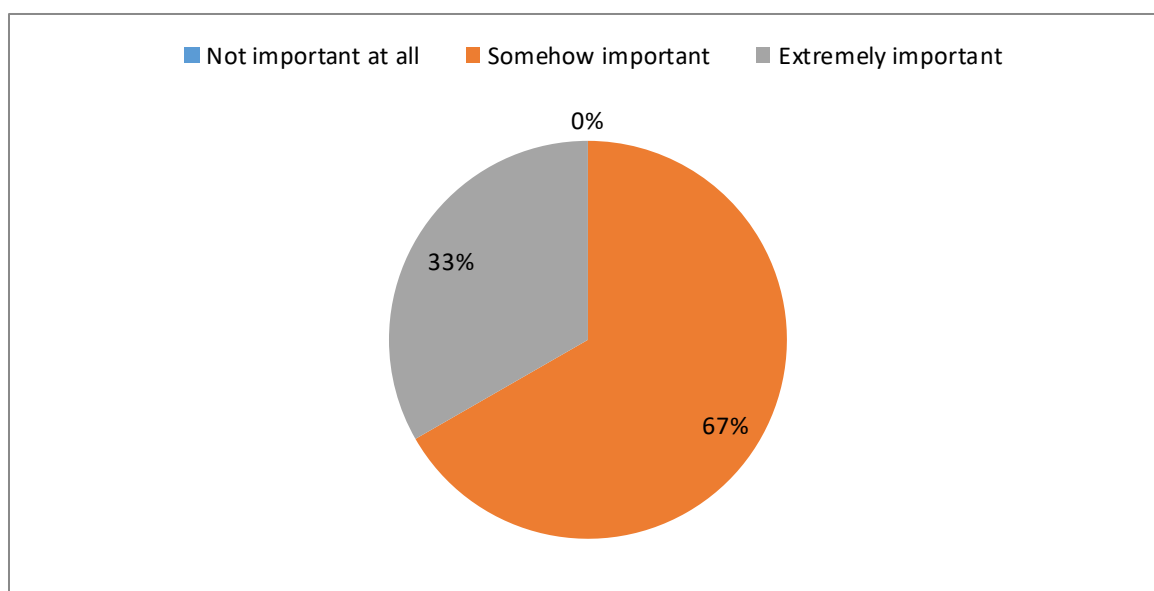


Figure 3.9: Reading strategies foster critical thinking

While (33,3%) of the participants indicated that reading strategies are the appropriate tool to develop critical thinking skills, the majority of the respondents (67%) declared that reading strategies are important in developing critical thinking skills.

Question 10: Do you think that using reading strategies can help learners become more independent thinkers?

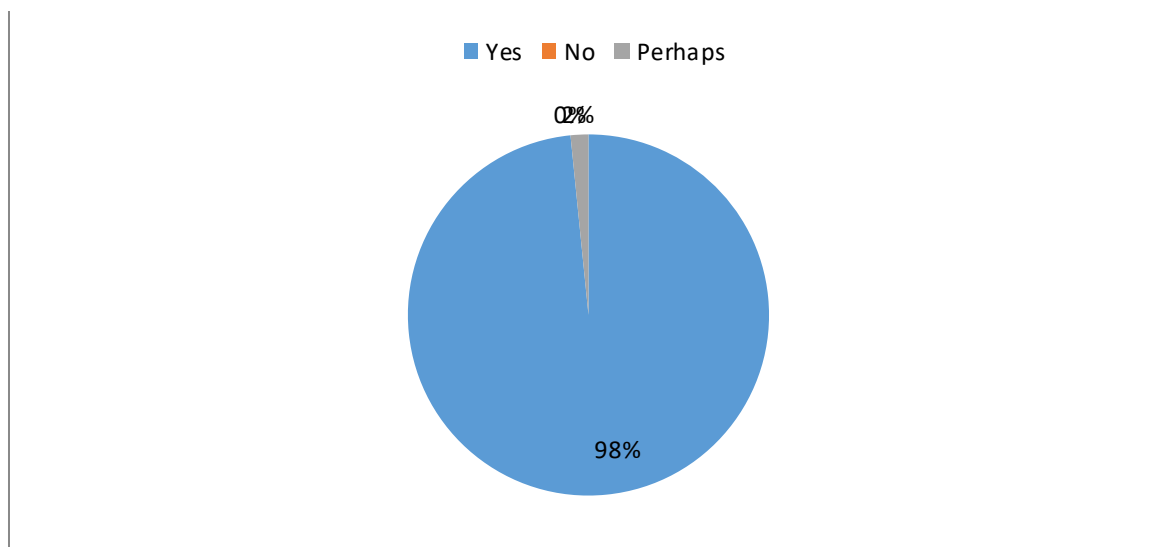


Figure 3.10: Reading strategies for independent thinkers

According to the results displayed in the graphic, (98%) of respondents answered **yes** which means that reading strategies help them to become more engaged with critical thinking. (2%) disagree that this strategies help students to be better thinkers.

Question11: What recommendations do you have for other learners looking to improve their critical thinking skills and reading strategies?

The majority of learners did add some comments. They might have felt that previous questions were sufficient for them to express their ideas provided only Some of them commented that a learner should read carefully, others suggested taking notes is the most used strategy for learners, and the remaining ones chose the summarizing strategy to improve their critical thinking skills

3.3 Summary of Results of students' Questionnaire

The first section of the students' questionnaire indicated that the majority of second-year master literature and civilization students have a positive attitude towards studying EFL. Moreover, they are also satisfied with their level of proficiency in English, which indicates that they have considerable capacities and high motivation that would allow them to learn more and develop their level.

The second section "Reading" reveals that the majority of the participants gave much to reading. In addition, the results obtained from the analysis of the last section reveal that the majority of respondents are aware of the existence of critical thinking skills. This awareness will probably help them develop such skills. Also, when they were asked about the assumption that reading strategies can be used as a tool to enhance critical thinking skills. This probability was confirmed in graphic (08) and (09), when the majority approved the previous assumption, claiming that reading strategies are important to achieve this aim. To sum up, from the analysis of the students' questionnaires we conclude that the majority of learners confirmed that they have a positive attitude towards developing critical thinking skills through reading strategie.

3.4 Analysis of the Teachers' Interview

The interview was mainly addressed to teachers of English who teach the English language. The total number of the interviewed teachers was three (03) the purpose behind the interview is to report opinions concerning developing critical thinking skills through reading strategies.

Question 01: How many years have you been teaching in the department of English?

Most of the teachers have an experience of more than ten years. One teacher said she has taught for 12 years so she likely has a high level of expertise and knowledge in her field, the remaining teachers range from eight to ten years which helps them to bring a unique perspective to their discussion with learners. The numbers of teaching years reflect teachers' experience in dealing with learners and their possibility to identify the kind of reading strategies often used by the students. But also their critical thinking abilities and gaps. The first question is concerned with the period they have been teaching in the English department, there is a slight diversity in the teacher experiences in teaching

Question 02: How do you motivate students to learn through reading ?

The first two teachers focused on raising curiosity, while the third teacher emphasized the importance of discussion and student engagement. By presenting through provoking texts and encouraging dialogue, the same teacher creates a more interactive and meaningful reading experience for the studies. This approach allows students to explore and analyze the texts, fostering a deeper understanding and motivation to read.

Question 03: What teaching strategies and techniques have you already tried?

The first teacher didn't reply on this question The second teacher has been using a blended strategy and questioning to engage students in their learning. Blending learning

involves combining traditional face-to-face instruction with online or digital resources, which can be effective in creating a more personalized and interactive learning experience the use of questioning can also help students think critically and deepen their understanding of the material.

The third teacher highlighted the importance of considering various factors such as the level of education, students' level, the module and the content of the course when determining the appropriate teaching strategies. This approach ensures that the teaching methods align with the specific needs and goals of each group of students. Additionally, incorporating audiovisual techniques can capture students' attention and enhance their engagement with the text.

Question 04: What specific reading strategies do you find effective for promoting critical thinking among EFL learners?

The first teacher focuses on questioning, predicting and summarizing to enhance critical thinking. This approach encourages students to engage with the text actively about the context, the second teacher emphasizes profound reading suggesting a more intense level of engagement with the material. Lastly, the third teacher prioritizes questioning debating, collaborating and evoking observation and autonomy, fostering a more independent learning environment, each approach offers a unique perspective on nurturing critical thinking skills, giving students valuable tools to analyze and interpret information.

Question 05: Have you noticed any differences in the development of critical thinking skills between EFL learners who actively engage in reading strategies compared to those who do not yet?

All teachers agree that engaging in reading strategies can greatly enhance critical thinking skills in EFL learners. The first teacher mentioned that learners who actively use these strategies can draft their interpretation of texts, which is an available skill. the second

teacher also confirmed this, emphasizing that reading indeed enlarges individuals' knowledge and deepens their criticality.

Question 06: How can EFL teachers encourage students to apply reading strategies independently and transfer critical thinking skills to other academic areas ?

The first teacher emphasizes the importance of providing background knowledge, practicing strategies, and applying them in relevant contexts. This method scaffolds learning and helps students understand how to use these skills effectively. On the other hand, the second teacher acknowledges the tendency for students to neglect reading outside of academic requirements and suggests fostering a love of reading to encourage the independent application of reading strategies. It's all about creating a supportive environment that motivates students to engage with the material in the classroom.

3.5 Summary of Teachers' Interview

In the interview, the researcher explored strategies for motivating students to independently apply reading strategies, fostering the transfer of critical thinking skills to various academic domains, and engaging learners with diverse abilities. Notably, there's a discernible gap in critical thinking development between EFL students who actively employ reading strategies and those who don't, highlighting the importance of integrating such strategies into EFL instruction. By providing explicit instruction on techniques like summarization and questioning, teachers can empower students to develop deeper comprehension and critical thinking skills. Overall, the discussion underscores the need for a supportive learning environment where reading strategies are not only taught but also actively encouraged and practiced, ultimately leading to enhanced academic proficiency and cognitive development among students.

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to enhance the critical thinking skills of EFL learners. The focus of this chapter was to provide an in-depth discussion and analysis of the data obtained from the data collection tools used in this study: the online questionnaire and the online interview. Moreover, this chapter shed light on EFL learners from the Department of Literature and Civilization to learn the extent of the impact and role of reading strategies in developing their critical thinking skills (CTS). The research data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to test the validity of the previously established research hypotheses

Chapter Four

Limitations, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Chapter Four

Limitations, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Pedagogical Implications	43
4.3 Limitations of The Study.....	44
4.4 Recommandations and Suggestions.....	44
Conclusion.....	46

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides recommendations, suggestions, and limitations with some pedagogical implications. The purpose of this study is to explore the main strategies that help learners to enhance critical thinking.

4.2 Pedagogical Implications

The main aim of this study is to investigate teachers' as well as student's perspectives on the impact of reading strategies on developing critical thinking skills. Its results revealed that both participants have a positive attitude towards fostering critical thinking skills through reading strategies. Moreover, it is also revealed that critical thinking is an important skill that would help students achieve better results in their academic careers. However, from the analysis of students' questionnaires, it is noticed that students give reading the importance it needs. As a result, they should work to develop their critical thinking skills. Because being only aware of its existence will not pave the way towards developing it. Teachers as well, should provide their students with activities that explicitly allow them to practice and develop their critical thinking skills. They should also design more extensive and intensive reading programs to help students develop other skills, most importantly their cognitive and metacognitive ones. Moreover, teachers may integrate reading strategies as a means to engage their students to think critically. This can be done through classroom discussion about what has been read, by engaging students to use different critical thinking skills and sub-skills such as inferring, analyzing, synthesizing, criticizing, and evaluating. Teachers have also sought to implement some strategies that aim at developing their learners' critical thinking ability since the majority agreed about the importance of developing this skill in the development of their

Students' academic achievements. In other words, teachers may seek balance to teach critical thinking skills the way they do with the other four skills. At the level of curriculum, designers should implement some modules, if possible, that are directed towards teaching critical thinking skills.

4.3 Limitations of The Study

We may be aware that our research may have different limitations. The first is a time constraint since this research was completed in less than six months, which makes it very hard to do the research appropriately. In other words, this research would have been better conducted, if the time allotted for it was quite larger than it was. The second limitation is the scope of the study, as its focus was on second-year master literature and civilization students, and a limited number of teachers. Thus, its results cannot be generalized. Moreover, another obstacle that hindered this study was the lack of printed data at the level of the University's library. Thus, the researcher depended much more on online e-books that were not available in PDF formats to be printed-, nor they could be saved to be read offline. Consequently, it was very hard to read from such sources. In addition, two teachers did not respond to the interview, as this delayed the progress of the dissertation and affected the quality of the research. As well as the loss of valuable insights or perspectives crucial to the study.

4.4 Recommendations

Teaching students how to read competently about topics they may not be passionate about may be a more valuable goal than allowing them to choose their favorite topics, providing exposure to different reading strategies, especially strategies necessary for their development to enhance their ability to think critically. So they need to connect the information they read to their feelings, beliefs and thoughts. Moreover, to improve students' communication skills and expand their thinking, it is necessary to provide more opportunities

For collaborative learning in the classroom. This can be accomplished by allocating time for student-led discussions, debates, and group activities, encouraging open-ended questions that promote critical thinking, providing designated spaces for student-initiated discussions, incorporating reflective practices that develop metacognitive skills, and fostering a supportive and helpful environment. An inclusive classroom environment provides professional development for teachers to learn effective strategies to facilitate student-centered learning. By implementing these approaches, students can be empowered to take a more active role in their learning and develop the vital communication and critical thinking abilities they need to succeed. Creating a classroom environment that promotes student participation in discussions and collaborative work can enhance their critical thinking skills. Fostering a learning environment that empowers students to gather relevant information goes beyond simply acquiring knowledge. It equips them with crucial skills for navigating the information age. By actively seeking out information, students become adept data managers. Imagine them presented with scenarios that mimic real-world situations. Here, they can practice identifying various options, a vital first step in critical thinking. Equipped with this information, they can then strategically choose the most suitable course of action, fostering their decision-making abilities. Finally, reviewing their choices allows them to learn from successes and failures, solidifying their critical thinking foundation. In this process, teachers play a vital role. They can guide students by creating a safe space for them to express their opinions and engage in meaningful discussions. These interactions connect information gathering to students' own experiences, making the learning process not just informative, but also deeply personal and engaging. Ultimately, this combination of information literacy, critical thinking, and open discussion empowers students to become creative problem-solvers, prepared to tackle challenges both within and beyond the classroom.

Conclusion

This chapter was an attempt to support the integration of reading strategies into the EFL curriculum to enhance critical thinking among learners. The recommendations and suggestions outlined in this chapter may be useful to EFL teachers who are interested in effectively linking reading strategies and critical thinking in their study. Through the important variety of reading strategies and practical advice, they can show their students what readers do to enhance their thinking.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Critical thinking is often seen as an intimidating skill for students at all levels, particularly at the Master's level where learners recognize the need to enhance this skill. The importance of critical thinking goes beyond just the educational realm, as it empowers students to effectively evaluate, synthesize, and solve problems in various aspects of life. In line with this, the purpose of this research was to address research questions and verify hypotheses regarding the significant role of reading strategies in developing critical thinking among EFL learners. To achieve this, a descriptive method and a case study were employed to explore which reading strategies best promote the critical thinking abilities of EFL learners. It was clear that the students lacked awareness of the importance and practicality of the topic. Therefore, to understand the skills needed to excel in the subject, they must develop the ability to think critically and use strategies that bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world applications. An examination of thinking as a phenomenon revealed that teaching reading poses certain challenges that can only be overcome through specialized learning and training methods.

Data collection for this study included the use of a learner questionnaire and a teacher interview to test the proposed hypotheses. Before this, a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature was conducted to collect information about different definitions and strategies to enhance EFL learners' thinking skills. Promoting critical thinking has become an integral part of the educational curricula in many universities. Implementing thinking skills in the classroom requires the cooperation of well-trained teachers and learners who understand this skill. Trainers will provide engaging reading lessons that challenge and guide learners, promoting greater interest and motivation to develop their thinking abilities.

After analyzing the questionnaire and interview data, the researcher reached several conclusions regarding the previous research hypotheses and questions. Qualitative and quantitative analyses indicate that enhancing thinking skills in EFL classrooms through

General Conclusion

reading strategies is imperative, necessitating the implementation of specific frameworks to enhance learners' mastery of the target language and its appropriate use outside the classroom. Interpretation of the results confirms the effectiveness of reading skills in the thinking process.

The research findings can be summarized as follows: The results revealed a significant relationship between critical thinking and reading strategies in EFL learners. Firstly, a positive relationship was found between the two, suggesting that learners with stronger critical thinking skills tend to utilize reading strategies more effectively. Secondly, the study highlighted specific strategies employed by EFL learners. Summarization and questioning emerged as the most frequently used strategies, particularly among good readers. Therefore, the first hypothesis was confirmed; that good readers rely heavily on these strategies, solidifying their position as common and valuable tools for comprehension. Interestingly, the research also shed light on the role of EFL teachers in fostering a positive learning environment. The findings suggest that teachers who create a supportive atmosphere that encourages student autonomy, choice, and constructive feedback can significantly boost student motivation. This emphasis on a positive classroom environment highlights its importance in not just creating engaged learners but also potentially influencing their critical thinking and reading strategy use.

Overall, this study demonstrates that enhancing critical thinking skills in EFL classrooms through reading strategies is a difficult but fruitful endeavor.

It requires the combined efforts of all participants in the teaching and learning process, especially well-prepared teachers and learners who adopt appropriate learning strategies.

In conclusion, it can be inferred that incorporating reading strategies in EFL instruction is a highly effective technique for enhancing learners' critical thinking skills.

References

References

Books

- Almuntairi, N.R. (2018). 'Effective Reading Strategies for Increasing the Reading Comprehension Level of Third-Grade Students with Learning Disabilities. (2018). Dissertation, 3247
- Burns.A. (1999). 'Collaborative Action Research For English Language Teachers'. Retrieved from <http://wwwresearchgate.net>
- Decode. (2015). Strategies for Teaching Reading. Retrieved from Decoda literacy solution: <http://www.decode.ca/practionersyouth.literary>
- Leu & Kinzer. (1978) Effective Reading Instruction, k-8. Retrieved from <http://wwwresearchgate.note> PPG.
- M. Easwaramoorthy & Fataneh Zarinpoush, (2006). Interviewing for Research. Imagine Canada 425 Avenue University. Retrieved from <https://www.imagine Canada.ca>
- Oxford. (2006). Word Power Dictionary (pp 717). New York: Oxford University press.
- Oxford, R, & Crookall,D.(1989).Research on language learning Strategies: Methods, findings and Instructional issues, Modern language Journal,73 ,404-419.
- Teaching and Learning Unit. (2010). Reading kills Helpsheet. University of Melbourne.
- The New York Times. (2014). Skimming and Scanning: Using the Times to Develop Reading Skills. Retrieved from the New York Times.
- Paul, R., & Elder, L. (2002). How to Improve Student Learning 30 practical ideas. California: Sonoma.Paul, R, & Elder, L. (2007). Our Concept of Critical Thinking: Critical Thinking.

Journals

- Hamed Taherdoost.Designing a Questionnaire For Research Paper: A Comprehensive Guide To Design and Develop an Effective Questionnaire. Asian Journal of Managerial Science, 2022, 11, pp.8-16.10.51983/aims-2022.11.1.3087.hal-3741836.Retrieved from <https:// hal.science/hal-3741836>

References

Sandra Hughes. The Leisure Reading Habits of Urban Adolescents. *Journal of Adolescents & Adult Literacy*, 2007, 51.1.3. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.51.1.3>

International Journal of Architecture, Engineering and Construction. Vol 2, No 2, June 2013, 135.

K.R. VinithaRani (2016) Promoting Students' Critical Thinking through Reading Strategies

Instruction in a Reading Class. Binus School, Simpring, Jakarta, Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 11(2), October 2016, pp.133.151. <https://media.neliti.com>.

Journal of English Language Teaching, 11(2), October 2016, pp.133.151.

<https://media.neliti.com>.

Journal of Reading vol, 27.No.1 (Oct. 1983), pp.56-60(5 pages), published by: International Association

Wiley, S. (2015). Strategies to Grow Critical Thinking Skills. *Journal of Accountancy*. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251671840>.

Theses

Bouaoun, S. (2020). An Investigation into The Use of Reading Strategies to Develop Learners'

Critical Thinking. (Masters' Dissertation), (2020). Retrieved from <http://archives.univ-biskra.../18051/1/BOUAON-SOUMIA.pdf>. p. (06) & (07).

Hattab, A. (2018). Promoting Critical Skills for EFL Learners through Teaching Reading and

Writing. (Masters' Dissertation) Retrieved from <http://e-biblio.univ-mosta.dz/handle/123456789/6643>

Himoud, K. (2017). Students' Perceptions towards the Effects of Reading Strategies on

Comprehension : The Case of First Year Master Students at The University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. (Master Dissertation). Retrieved from: <https://dspace.univ-guelma.dz>.

Rouai, S. (2014). The Use of Reading Strategies in Improving Reading Comprehension.

(Masters' Dissertation). (2014). Retrieved from <http://dspace.uuniv-ouergla.dz...456789/4900/1/rouai-sohila.pdf>. p. (14).

References

Websites

Websites references: [http://www.aui.ma/personal/~A.Cads/1201/Mod2/M2-links/L-6-Critical thinking and Argumentation.html](http://www.aui.ma/personal/~A.Cads/1201/Mod2/M2-links/L-6-Critical%20thinking%20and%20Argumentation.html)

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix (A): Teachers' interview

Dear teachers

We are currently researching the use of reading strategies in the development of EFL learners' critical thinking. Therefore, you are kindly invited to participate in the current research by answering this interview.

1. How many years have you been in the department of English?

.....
.....

2. How do you motivate students to learn through reading?

.....
.....

3. What teaching strategies and techniques have you already tried?

.....
.....

4. What specific reading strategies do you find effective for promoting critical thinking among EFL learners?

.....
.....

5. Have you noticed any differences in the development of critical thinking skills between EFL learners who actively engage in reading strategies compared to those who do not?

.....
.....

6. How can EFL teachers encourage students to apply reading strategies independently and transfer critical thinking skills to other academic areas?

.....
.....

Thank you for collaboration.

Appendices

Appendix (B) Students' Questionnaire

Dear students

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire about how reading strategies can help develop critical thinking skills in learners. Your responses will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of various strategies in enhancing critical thinking abilities. Please select the most appropriate option for each question.

1. In general, how would you rate your English language proficiency?

- Very satisfying
- Satisfying
- Not satisfying

2. Do you read in English?

- YES
- No

3. How do you manage reading in English?

- Easily
- Fairly easily
- With difficulty

4. To what extent do you agree that reading is a thinking process?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral

- Disagree

5. Do you think that critical thinking skill can be enhanced through reading?

- YES
- Not sure
- No

6. How do you critically thinking when you read

.....
.....

7. Which of the following reading strategies can help develop critical thinking skills?

- Skimming and scanning
- Deep reading and analysis
- Making connections between texts
- All of the above

8. How can using reading strategies lead to improved critical thinking in learners?

- By encouraging active engagement with the text
- By promoting reflection and analysis
- By fostering independent thinking and questioning
- All of the above

9. In your opinion, how important are reading strategies in fostering critical thinking skills in learners?

- Not important at all
- Somehow important

- Extremely
- important

Appendices

10. Do you think that using reading strategies can help learners become more independent thinkers?

- Yes
- No
- perhaps

11. What recommendations do you have for other learners looking to improve their critical thinking skills and reading strategies?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your collaboration.

Résumé:

Cette recherche vise à explorer comment ces stratégies de lecture contribuent à l'amélioration des compétences de pensée critique des apprenants dans divers contextes éducatifs. À cette fin, une approche à méthodes mixtes à été utilisée à travers un questionnaire en ligne envoyé à vingt-sept (27) apprenants EFL du Département de littérature et de civilisation à l'Université Belhadj Bouchaib. De plus, une interview en ligne à été administré à trois (03) enseignants EFL du même département. Les résultats préliminaires indiquent une corrélation positive entre l'utilisation de certaines stratégies de lecture et le développement de la pensée critique. Les participants qui ont déclaré avoir utilisé ces stratégies ont souvent démontré des niveaux plus élevés de pensée analytique et de capacités de résolution de problèmes.

Les mots clés : la pensée critique, stratégies de lecture, capacités analytique.

ملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث الى استكشاف كيفية مساهمة استراتيجيات القراءة هذه وغيرها في تعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي للمتعلمين في سياقات تعليمية متنوعة. و تحقيقا لهذه الغاية، استخدم نهج الاساليب المختلطة من خلال استبيان الكتروني ارسل الى سبعة وعشرون (27) من متعلمي قسم الادب و الحضارة في جامعة بلحاج بوشعيب. بالاضافة الى ذلك، تم اجراء مقابلة عبر الانترنت مع ثلاث (03) مدرسين اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية من نفس القسم. النتائج الاولية اوضحت وجود علاقة ايجابية بين استخدام بعض استراتيجيات القراءة و تنمية مهارات التفكير النقدي. غالبا ما اظهر المشاركون الذين أبلغوا عن استخدامهم لتلك الاستراتيجيات مستويات أعلى من التفكير التحليلي و قدرات على حل مشكلات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفكير النقدي، الاستراتيجيات القراءة، القدرات التحليلية.

Summary:

This research aims to explore how reading strategies contribute to the enhancement of learners' critical thinking skills in diverse educational contexts. Therefore, a mixed-methods approach was utilized through an online questionnaire sent to twenty-seven (27) EFL learners from the Department of Literature and Civilization at Belhadje Bouchaib University. In addition, an online interview was administered to three (03) EFL teachers from the same department. The results indicate a positive correlation between the use of certain reading strategies and the development of critical thinking skills. Participants who reported having employed those strategies frequently demonstrated higher levels of analytical thinking and problem-solving abilities

Keywords: analytical abilities, critical thinking, reading strategies