



YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**EFL TEACHERS' CRITICAL READING CONCEPTUALIZATION AND
THEIR PRACTICES TO IMPROVE UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY
STUDENTS' CRITICAL READING SKILLS**

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May, 2022

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PRACTICES TO IMPROVE UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY STUDENTS'
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BY
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THESES SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MA
IN
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY

MAY, 2022

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study aims to investigate (a) how in-service EFL teachers conceptualize critical reading, and (b) what they do in class to improve critical reading skills of the preparatory school students at the tertiary level. The data was first gathered from 20 teachers through an open-ended questionnaire developed for the purpose of finding their conceptualizations of critical reading within the context of a state university. Next, three of these teachers were selected to observe 9 hours in their reading-writing classes to see to what extent they integrated critical reading activities into their teachings based on their conceptualization. The results of the content analysis revealed that Turkish EFL teachers conceptualized critical reading under themes identified as analysis, evaluation, explanation, inference, interpretation, self-regulation, background knowledge to provide sound basis for judgment, differentiate fact from opinion, recognizing bias, and selective attention. Some of these themes were found to be in line with the critical thinking categories identified by Facione (2013). Moreover, the observation data revealed that teachers did a variety of activities to promote critical reading skills of their students. The study discusses these findings to draw invaluable implications both for in-service teachers and pre-service teachers in the initial teacher education programs.

Key Words: Critical reading, In-service EFL teachers

ÖZET

Bu nitel çalışma (a) hizmet içi İngilizce öğretmenlerinin eleştirel okumayı nasıl kavramsallaştırdıklarını, ve (b) yüksek öğrenimdeki hazırlık öğrencilerinin eleştirel okuma becerilerini geliştirmek için derste ne yaptıklarını araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. İlk olarak, bir devlet üniversitesinde çalışan 20 öğretmenin eleştirel okumayı nasıl kavramsallaştırdıklarını bulma amacıyla geliştirilen açık uçlu anketle veri toplanmıştır. Daha sonra, bu öğretmenlerden üç tanesi seçilerek, okuma yazma dersinde eleştirel okuma aktivitelerini ne ölçüde kullandıklarını bulmak amacıyla 9 saat gözlemlenmiştir. İçerik analizinin sonuçları İngilizce öğretmenlerinin eleştirel okumayı, analiz, değerlendirme, açıklama, çıkarım yapma, yorumlama, öz-düzenleme, gerçekte fikri birbirinden ayırt etme, önyargıyı fark etme, ve seçici bilgi temaları altında kavramsallaştırdıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Bunlardan bazılarının Facione (2013)'un ortaya koyduğu eleştirel düşünme kategorileriyle aynı doğrultuda olduğu bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, gözlem verileri öğretmenlerin öğrencilerinin eleştirel okuma becerilerini geliştirmek için çeşitli aktiviteler yaptırdıkları ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu çalışma, hizmet içi ve hizmet öncesi eğitimde bulunan öğretmenlerin öğretmen eğitimi programlarına değerli katkılar bulunacağını tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eleştirel okuma, Hizmet-için İngilizce öğretmenleri



To my family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude and respect to my thesis advisor Dr. Evrim Eveyik-Aydın. She motivated and guided me throughout my research and she supported me to be able to conduct such a study. In addition to academic guidance, I am also grateful for her kindness.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Ayşe Semra AKYEL for her continuous support. It has been an honor to be able to get guidance from her.

I would also like to thank the committee members Dr. Görsev Sönmez and Dr. Ece Genç Yöntem for their fruitful feedback for my thesis.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

In a globalized world that is constantly changing and developing, we are exposed to new information all the time. Advances in technology in the 21st century have enabled us to get fast and easy access to any information we seek both in our daily and academic life. As the amount of information we obtain increases, it becomes necessary for us to develop a critical perspective to understand the subject matters clearly, to evaluate the points and arguments made by the others, and to establish our own point of view based on the information the truthfulness and reliability of which we have already questioned.

In order to think critically, mastering good and critical reading skills is essential, and therefore is a compulsory component of contemporary education. Although critical thinking is an umbrella term for critical reading, critical writing and critical listening, the former is perceived to be leading to the development of critical thinking skills more as people mostly gain information by reading to learn and write especially in academic settings, and therefore it is the main focus of this study. Unlike reading for specific information and for the general understanding, reading critically involves many higher order skills like evaluating, inference making, questioning, and analyzing the ideas presented by the authors of the text (Karadeniz, 2014; Macknish, 2011; Manarin et al, 2015). In order to improve all these skills in academic settings, students should be involved in the most appropriate activities.

Despite the importance of developing a critical mindset, there is limited research on what teachers actually do in their teaching settings and what classroom practices and tasks they particularly select to develop these skills. In fact it is often suggested that the faculties and the programs which include critical reading for academic purposes should well define the tasks improving critical skills at tertiary level (Manarin et al., 2015). The research is even more limited within the context of preparatory language schools (Derince, 2016) although in these settings the students are required to do a lot of readings both in general and vocational English before they start majoring in their field of study at faculties. The teachers in preparatory language schools spend an average of 24 hours a week with these students to develop their use of language skills as the students will be expected to do academic readings, listen to lectures, get involved in discussions, and prepare assignments which require critical reflections and evaluations when they transfer to their programs. Therefore, it is important to understand the nature of practices in preparatory school settings, and how much of what is done in preparatory schools contributes to the development of critical skills to be expected from students in their studies during the successive years. However, teachers' conceptualizations underline their practices, and therefore, how they perceive critical reading should be understood well first.

1.2. The Purpose of the Study

The present study aims to investigate how EFL teachers conceptualize critical reading and what they do in class to improve their preparatory school students' critical reading. Critical reading is a 21st century skill that is expected to be taught to the young generation by EFL teachers at all levels. In order to have insight for what is done at the language classes at university preparatory schools to improve critical

reading skills of language learners while they are mastering reading skills in English, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do Turkish EFL teachers at a state university preparatory school context conceptualize critical reading?
2. What do Turkish EFL teachers do in class to improve their students' critical reading skills?

1.3. Overview of the Methodology

The current study was conducted at the preparatory school of a state university in Turkey during the Fall and Spring semesters in 2018-19. It adopted a qualitative research design to investigate EFL teachers' conceptualization and practices to improve their students' critical reading. The data for the first research question came from 20 Turkish EFL teachers who responded to an open ended questionnaire developed for the purpose of the study. The data for the second research question came from the interviews conducted with three of these 20 EFL teachers and from the observations of their classroom practices. Firstly, the open ended questionnaire was prepared, piloted with EFL lecturers for its wording and clarity, and then emailed to 20 Turkish EFL teachers. The questionnaire included three parts: The first part had a consent form, the second part included questions to gather demographic data, and the third part included two open ended questions to reveal the EFL teachers' perceptions of critical reading and how they integrate critical reading into their classes. Secondly, three of these 20 EFL teachers were selected for the observation and interview based on their answers in the open ended questionnaire part. The EFL teachers who gave unclear answers and those who perceived their activities as contributing to the improvement of their students' critical reading skills in English were selected to be

observed in class followed by a semi-structured interview. Each of these three teachers were observed for nine hours. The researcher took notes of the activities used by the teachers during the observations. Lastly, observed teachers were interviewed to clarify what they had stated for the open ended questionnaire and what they did to implement critical reading into their teachings. Interviews were recorded by the consent of the EFL teachers and transcribed by the researcher. The data gathered through the open ended questionnaire, observation, and interview were analyzed using content analysis because of the nature of the research.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Although the literature is replete with studies that emphasize the importance of critical thinking and reading as the most essential 21st century skills, and the necessity of having skilled teachers who can develop critical thinkers and readers, little attention has been given to how teachers define and conceptualize these skills. However, teachers' understanding of what processes critical reading involves forms the basis for their decisions regarding what tasks and activities to use in their actual practices. This issue is even more important at the tertiary level as the students will be regularly involved in activities that require higher order thinking skills. Having said this, the present study is important on the grounds that it aims to shed light into how critical reading is conceptualized and integrated into teaching by EFL teachers working at the language preparatory school of a state university, a context underexplored in Turkey.

The findings of the study will enable us to see if teachers who are supposed to improve their learners' critical reading skills are actually aware of the processes involved in critical reading as suggested in the literature. To be able to teach those

processes, teachers themselves should be competent critical readers and have the adequate pedagogical knowledge to teach them. With this regard, the study suggests that the courses in four-year curriculum of teacher education programs should be revised to integrate activities, tasks, and assignments that encourage pre-service teachers to think and read at critical levels before they become teachers. Hence, not only do they develop their own critical reading skills, but also they learn what processes to teach in their future classes to improve their students' critical reading skills. Besides, the findings enable us to understand how EFL teachers in the preparatory schools integrate critical reading activities to their classes. As it is of utmost importance to develop these skills at tertiary level, increasing teachers' awareness of their own conceptualizations of critical reading and what they do or do not do in class with this respect will have significant implications regarding the training of in-service teachers as well.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations. Data came from 20 Turkish EFL teachers working at a preparatory school of a state university in Istanbul. Different results could have been obtained if the study involved participants working at different universities, state and foundation, in different cities. Therefore, although the results reveal what teachers do to improve critical reading skills of their learners within the specific context of that language preparatory school at a state university, by no means these results can be generalized to all contexts in Turkey.

Another limitation of the study is the limited number of EFL teachers observed and interviewed. Out of 20, only three could be observed due to the difficulties in scheduling the observation timetable that would fit both for the researcher, who is also

a practicing EFL teacher at the same language preparatory school, and the participating teachers. The observation of more of the participants for longer hours of teaching could have yielded more data to enrich the study.

1.6. Significant Terms

Critical reading involves detecting the patterns of the text, differentiating between main and subordinate ideas, evaluating, making judgements and making inferences about the text (Manarin et al., 2015).

Critical thinking involves the skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation (Facione, 2013).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a theoretical background for critical reading and makes a brief review of the selected literature.

2.1. Reading

Reading is a complex cognitive skill which involves higher and lower level processes, skills, strategies, and resources that constantly interact with each other (Grabe and Stoller, 2002). Fluent reading starts with decoding through the rapid recognition of the words. Working memory has a significant role during this process as it stores and processes knowledge which is activated through word recognition. Lower-level cognitive processes deal with lexical access, syntactic parsing, and semantic proposition formation processes while higher-level processes include background knowledge and making inferences. For fluent reading there must be an interaction between these processes of noticing words, adopting linguistic instruction, making relation among the indicated pronouns, forming the complete text, combining and reorganizing data, formulating main points, evaluating interpretations and adjusting to the targets of the readers, namely the input provided by the text and the reader's background knowledge.

The purpose of reading varies, and the processes involved vary depending on these purposes. Reading is done to search for simple information, skim quickly for general understanding, integrate information from different sources, write and critique the text, learn, and for general comprehension. To achieve these purposes one uses a variety of skills and strategies like organizing the stages, making predictions, asking

questions to discover answers, making connection between the text and the background knowledge, making short statements of the main points, making deductions and connections among the given points, figuring out the meaning of the words, determining struggles, and criticizing the writer and the text to make reflections upon the text.

Besides, fluent reading is a dynamic process that should take place promptly in all kinds of reading purposes. It is a reciprocal process as the readers, who have internal or external motivation to read, try to comprehend the reading text by activating background knowledge and making criticism on the reading text. It is also a decisive, adjustable, deliberate, perceptive, and informative process. Readers whose motivation, attitude, feelings and expectations shape the reading process should decisively adjust themselves according to different purposes of the reading. Hence, reading is complicated as the processes involved differ according to tasks, motives, purpose of reading, and discourses.

2.2. Critical Reading

Based on liberal humanist actions which focus on a person's understanding, existence, origination and teaching purposes, critical reading refers to analyzing and interpreting the texts skeptically. According to Wallace and Poulson (2006) a person should be skeptical about the information that is learned, consistently question and examine different claims, respect others, be open-minded and constructive to be critical in an academic setting. The critical readers are expected to think about the intentions of the writer, and investigate the text to figure out the writer's argument and the primary claims of the arguments. Then, the critical readers interrogate the writer's knowledge of the particular texts, examine what the writers mean by the key

terms they use, and think if different beliefs can affect the writer's claims. They question the writer's claims in a respectful way, seek a relevance between the writer's claim and the things they write, and lastly check other sources regarding the writer's claims. The distinctive characteristics of critical reading is highlighted as determining patterns of the text, differentiating between main and subordinate ideas, evaluating, making judgements and making inferences about the text (Manarin et al., 2015).

Macknish (2011) defines critical reading as a process of communication with people and texts, which involves questioning, interpretation, evaluation, opinion, challenge, claim, justification and rationalization. Analytical evaluation of a text involves judging the rationale of the text, evaluating the validity of the claim and evidence, determining misconceptions, differentiating fact and opinion, spotting assumptions and being aware of the language. Also, critical reading involves recognizing and evaluating bias and identifying tone (Flemming, 2011). Similarly, critical literacy includes thinking about different points of views to construct texts, concentrating on wider socio-political impact, investigating underlying values, being aware of language, judging power and language connection, challenging the readers and the assumptions of the readers and the texts, and finding out the writer's hidden thoughts.

Knott (2005) states that critical reading involves one's evaluation of what is read by relating it to what is already known about the content, i.e. to the background knowledge about the subject. Critical readers can find evidence to support a claim, consider the alternative interpretations, and make judgment on the quality of interpretations made by the author. They can determine if the text is based on a theory, concept or a method, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the text.

Critical reading also requires finding reasonable proofs in relation to the author's and the reader's explicit and implicit values and assumptions presented in the text.

Teachers should encourage the students to question the texts and activate prior knowledge while reading the texts to become critical readers (Collins,1993).

According to Wallace (2003) there are three aspects of critical reading: linguistic, conceptual/critical and cultural. The linguistic aspect concerns how the students comprehend the underlying meaning of the texts. Grammatical knowledge of the students is considered crucial to be able to understand how the language choice of the student is influenced. Under this aspect, foreign language students are considered to be ahead of the native speakers because foreign students are more capable of the grammatical features of the foreign languages. The conceptual/ cultural aspect of critical reading refers to thinking beyond the text to create an effective argument. The actions which are stated in the reading texts would be considered and the implications of the actions would be drawn by making a cognitive and critical connection between the text and the lives of the reader's. The cultural aspect, on the other hand, mentions that the purpose of the reading texts should not be to make the students become aware of the American or British culture. On the contrary, the students should become aware of the similarities and differences of different cultures.

Critical reading and critical thinking are acknowledged to be similar processes defined by almost the same constructs. In other words, critical reading is often considered as the synonym of critical thinking (Earle, 1972; Wardeberg, 1967; Williams, 1959). In a way critical reading is thinking while reading (Cervetti and Pervales, 2001; Collins, 1993; Sochor, 1959). According to Devine (1964) critical

thinking skills cannot be taught on their own because they are mental constructs, but can only be instructed through critical listening or critical reading.

Ennis (1993) primarily illustrates critical thinking by making a connection with Bloom's Taxonomy's upper levels which are analysis, synthesis and evaluation. However, he believes that this definition is not enough to define critical thinking. He adds up to the definition by stating that critical thinking is also a rational way of making reflections on thoughts and that examining the trustworthiness of an information leads to critical thinking. Determining the outcome, logic and expectations may also help understanding critical thinking. Establishing and supporting a point of view, describing a concept that is suitable to explain a text, being broad minded and knowledgeable, and making inferences are also processes involved in critical thinking.

According to Facione (2013), critical thinking is a way of thinking with a clear aim that can be achieved cooperatively. His conceptualization of critical thinking involves interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation. He explains each of these dispositions in detail as demonstrated in the table below.

Table 1

Subcategories of Critical Thinking

Core skills	Subskills
Interpretation	to comprehend and clarify meaning to notice a problem and to depict without being partial; to apprehend a person's intentions by the look on their face; to differentiate main idea from subordinate ideas; to categorize in an organized way; to paraphrase to determine author's purpose, theme and point of view
Analysis	to pinpoint the connection between statements to examine ideas and arguments to establish similarities and differences to understand main claim to spot implied presuppositions to depict main conclusion and the causes to lay out the relationship of sentences and paragraphs to one another to construct an essay in graphic
Evaluation	to evaluate the validity and logic of statements; to assess the trustworthiness of an author to assess the contradiction of two statements to assess whether proof defends to determine the aspects of a dependable person to assess whether a claim's conclusion is definite to assess the relevance of a claim
Inference	to determine conclusion to construct hypotheses to think about consistent data and their consequences to question evidence to figure out options to conclude to guess the upcoming actions upon things known to synthesize; to gather information to find out alternatives to solve a problem to conduct a scientific experiment

Table 1 (Continue)

Subcategories of Critical Thinking

Explanation	to show meaningful results to present and rationalize arguments to introduce a person's arguments to explain method and result to show conclusion on a chart, to take notes for future reference to indicate the guideline to assess the qualification of a perception to create a graph to point out evidence
Self-Regulation	to monitor one's cognitive activities in a self-conscious way to consider your belief on an argumentative matter to check whether you understand the person who's speaking to check your understanding of what you read and experience to differentiate your opinion from the author's to think about your interpretation or judgment again to reconsider, change and correct your answers

These components of critical thinking were created based on expert opinion. In a panel attended by experts on critical thinking, what constitutes critical thinking was discussed thoroughly. The experts concluded that interpretation, as one significant component of critical thinking, is to figure out the importance of the thoughts to make clear definitions. Analysis is to explore the beliefs to determine and analyze arguments. Evaluation is the assessment of the claims and the arguments. Inference is to question evidence to find possible alternatives and make conclusions. Explanation is presenting the results to validate the process by stating claims, and last self-regulation is to examine and correct yourself.

The present study adopts a definition of critical reading which involves the constructs of critical thinking suggested by Facione (2013).

2.3. Teaching Critical Reading and Thinking

Critical reading and thinking is considered essential by teachers in all kinds of different subjects. Researchers in the field suggest different approaches to instruct and foster critical thinking and reading skills. Ennis (1989) suggests four approaches to teach critical thinking: general approach, infusion, immersion and mixed approach. General approach means to teach critical thinking skills and its sub skills separately. The purpose of the general approach is to make the students critically think in and out of school context. The examples for general approach include contents and problems related to real life issues. Critical thinking can be part of a course, in separate units or in different subjects in general approach. The other approach, infusion, is carefully well-defined teaching to support and inspire the students to think critically in subject matter instruction, in which critical thinking skills and its components are taught explicitly. Another approach known as immersion is to integrate critical thinking into classes of different subjects; however, the components of critical thinking are not taught explicitly according to this approach. The last approach stated is mixed approach and it is the combination of general approach and infusion or immersion. In the general approach, critical thinking is taught in a course separately in different subjects. Subject in the context of these approaches refers to the courses at school and any matter that is taught. Another approach is defined by Nugent (1990) and she highlights the important points that should be considered before teaching critical thinking skills. She emphasizes that the teachers should be aware of the fact that it is an active and an on-going process in which we must respect different perspectives of the students and we must all be open to discussing the change of values. Moreover, the main purpose of teaching critical thinking skills should be to make the students use them in their daily life. In order to accomplish this, the instruction should be

student centered and the students should be actively involved in the learning process by asking questions to find answers, applying the relevant skills into their thinking, taking different perspectives into account, and making analysis. One other statement is made by Tomasek (2009) and he emphasizes the importance of selection of the reading materials which will encourage students to think. The students should also be assigned out of class readings which would have reasonable purposes to foster critical reading skills. He also states that students can read and think critically as long as the instructors can guide them to do so.

2.4. Studies Conducted on Critical Reading

Teachers' and students' perspectives and conceptualization of critical reading have been investigated in a variety of contexts. Bosley (2008) investigated how critical reading was taught to freshmen enrolled in English 101 writing composition classes at tertiary level in the USA. Data was collected from seven instructors teaching this course through an interview, and the examination of the course syllabi and the textbooks. The instructors were asked questions to find what they know about critical reading, the role it plays in composition courses, and how they teach it. The results revealed that the instructors conceptualized critical reading based on their experiences as including detecting main ideas, making inferences, noticing how the sentences are linked to one another, and understanding how the writer gets the attention of the readers to convince them about the content. While one instructor defined it as students' evaluation of what they read, the other stated that critical reading is the reflection of the critical thinker and the reader. The findings also revealed that analyzing the text, and making connections between what you read and the things that happen in real life are the primary components of critical reading. Thus

the students could learn that people might have different perspectives on a specific issue. The study suggested that students need to be guided to decode the difficult texts to make interpretations and to relate what they read to their background knowledge by more experienced instructors with different academic competences and interests. The experienced instructors should mentor the least experienced instructors.

Macknish (2009) investigated how Chinese students' critical reading skills developed throughout pre-university second language reading courses in Singapore. The aim was to find the critical reading insights of the students and what they were doing in peer group discussion in terms of critical reading. She collected data through interviews, e-mail questionnaires, focus group discussions and peer group discussions. The results of the study revealed that despite individual differences and diverse world views, students acknowledged the importance of critical reading, and their knowledge about critical reading increased. In the beginning of the study, they focused on analysis, evaluating the sources, making inferences, examining word and structure use, going beyond the text, identifying, and making descriptions while defining critical reading. However, in time they extended its definition to include other elements such as making comparisons between the writer and the reader's opinion upon a subject, using background knowledge while reading a text, making reflections, recognizing different point of views, making identifications, analyzing a text, making inferences, and having bias and doubts. Students' engagement in critical reading by reflecting upon their learning developed their abilities to think in detail.

Wilson (2015) conducted a study within the context of university preparatory schools to investigate how three experienced EAP teachers taught critical reading in their reading classes in Australia. She collected data through a five to ten week course

by observing the reading classes. She recorded the classes and made semi-structured interviews with the teachers and the students. The results of the study indicated that all the teachers were enthusiastic about using critical thinking skills in their classes in various ways to make the students become familiar with the related skills. The first teacher focused on making comparisons, making discussions for and against the given topic and thinking about the main ideas of the text. The second teacher's priority was on content and meaning of the text throughout the classes rather than the skills. The third teacher tried to model the use of critical thinking by concentrating on determination of main ideas, evaluation of different points of views and making inferences. The findings suggest that there is no right way to introduce critical thinking and reading skills. Different teachers and different institutions might adopt different components according to their students' needs, contexts and beliefs. Especially in cases where the classes have international students, teachers should carefully choose the materials and they should get the attention of the students to foster critical thinking and reading skills.

Latif (2022) examined university EFL teachers' critical literacy perspectives and practices in Egypt. The data was collected through an open ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The open-ended questionnaire had 10 questions which aimed to find out if the teachers were willing to integrate critical literacy into class and why, if it was possible to integrate critical literacy into EFL classes at pre-university, if the courses and topics were appropriate to foster critical literacy and if the gender of the students affected the use of critical literacy. Data came from 26 EFL teachers who responded to the questionnaire and six teachers interviewed. The results of the study indicated that 62% of the participating teachers were reluctant to integrate critical literacy because they wanted to stay away from possible work and classroom

management related problems. They only wanted to focus on the topic that needs to be taught and they thought the students were not ready to use critical literacy.

Approximately 38 % of the teachers were willing to integrate critical literacy into their classes because they wanted to promote and improve critical perspectives of the students. Regarding teachers' beliefs on teaching critical literacy at the pre-university, it was found out that the teachers did not think it was possible to teach it due to factors like the examination system, the reluctance of the teachers and the low English levels of the students. While some of the teachers thought that they could integrate critical literacy into any lessons, the others thought it would be better to include it in literature classes. It was seen that most of the participating teachers did not want to focus on critical literacy in class because they thought their priority at an EFL class was to teach English, not critical literacy.

Yuan et al (2022) investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of critical thinking and how they adopted it in their classes by reviewing the studies that focused on this issue. The studies were conducted in EFL settings all over the world during 2010-2020. The results of the study were demonstrated under three headings which are the EFL teachers' perceptions of critical thinking, how EFL teachers instructed critical thinking, and the methods of related studies. The perceptions of EFL teachers regarding critical thinking varied. Although the participants of the studies thought that critical thinking was important and they were responsible for teaching it to increase academic achievement, to prepare the students for work life and to increase the commitment of citizenship, it was found out that the definitions of the EFL teachers were not satisfactory and they were not completely explained. Some of the participating EFL teachers agreed that language classrooms are the best places to foster critical thinking skills. Whereas the others thought that the purpose of language

classrooms is to increase knowledge about the language and communication skills. Moreover, due to lack of pedagogical knowledge and exam based school system, it was challenging to focus on critical thinking skills. Three different types of critical thinking instruction were found in the study. The first type was the combination of personal experiences, reactions and the purpose of the writer. The second type was identifying the purpose, analyzing the input, analyzing the distinguishing features of the learners, instruction and revision of critical thinking skills, planning the teaching process and evaluation. The third type included steps like detecting the problem, investigating data, discussing and evaluating the findings, offering solutions and making reflections upon the learning processes and productions. All in all, the study pinpoints that the instruction of critical thinking skills might be too technical. The study also presents four types of instructional strategies which are triggering, exposing, guiding and extending. Triggering means to make the students curious and motivated; exposing is to make the students get into real-life and reading different materials; guiding indicates instructing the students to become critical thinkers; and extending signifies making the students think more about the teachers' instruction and the input of the materials.

Bezanilla et al. (2019) conducted a study to find out the strategies that 230 teachers, who work at public and private universities in Spain and Latin America, use to instruct critical thinking skills. The data was gathered through an open ended questionnaire with three questions. The purpose of the open-ended questionnaire was to find how the teachers described critical thinking, the methodologies that they use in class to develop the students' critical thinking skills, and the best method that they consider. The participating teachers reported that they made reflection, argumentation, analysis and synthesis upon the matters in oral and written communication. They also

stated that they use case studies that require collaborative learning, and try to make a connection between critical thinking skills and real world, problem based learning and project based learning. Teachers reported to be using the strategies like assessing, giving feedback, questioning, evaluating, interpreting, justifying and lecturing at minimum level. Among these, the teachers found getting focused on reading, analysis and synthesis in oral and written communication as the most useful method to be used in class. All in all, it is said that regardless of the chosen methods, a well-planned class can end up with meaningful outcomes.

As for the studies conducted in the Turkish context, with the participation of 24 university preparatory school students İçmez (2009) investigated the motivation and critical reading in EFL classrooms, and if critical reading could be adapted to traditional EFL reading lessons. The students were in control of the selection of the authentic reading texts and able to express their thoughts freely in the reading lessons. The data was collected through a group interview and questionnaires, one of which was adapted from an earlier study (İçmez, 2005). The results indicated that involving students in the selection of materials and allowing them to express themselves increased their motivation. However, students' prior school experiences and the preparation for the university exam lowered their motivation.

Kavanoz and Akbaş (2017) examined five EFL teachers' conceptualizations and strategies they used to integrate critical thinking practices into their classes with 9th and 10th graders at a private high school. The EFL teachers were asked to define critical thinking, interviewed to find their attitudes and observed to see how they promoted critical thinking in their lessons. The participants defined critical thinking as questioning the information and assumptions given in the text, criticizing them, and

exploring an issue objectively and from multiple perspectives. They believed in the necessity of developing their students' critical thinking skills. However, since critical reading is a step-by-step process that develops in time, they needed more time to encourage their students to think critically. Teachers also used some strategies to foster critical thinking in class. For instance, they supported students to read between the lines and analyzed the texts with the whole class. Moreover, they guided their students to think, question and discover the connection among the text. Through discussions they allowed their students to express themselves and they tried to go beyond the lesson topics by making a connection with the everyday issues. The study also revealed some obstacles faced in their classes. To illustrate, due to the education system students do not question the content of the lessons and they focus on placement tests which have multiple choice questions. Teachers think that the students do not have enough knowledge to be able to share their opinions upon the given subjects and they are not proficient enough to express their ideas in English. Lastly, teachers have to stick to the curriculum and they have limited time with the students so they cannot completely integrate critical thinking into their classes. It was seen that the teachers are familiar with critical thinking. They especially focused on questioning the content from different perspectives. However, it can be said that this is not enough to be a critical thinker. There are different components of critical thinking that should be considered and the teachers did not point out the other important elements of critical thinking. Moreover, the teachers' teachings did not have enough group work which is thought to foster critical thinking skills.

In light of all these, it can be said that the literature offers studies which explore critical reading from the perspective of teachers and students at higher education. The present study, however, sheds light into specifically how Turkish EFL teachers at a

university preparatory school context conceptualize critical reading and what they do in class to improve their students' critical reading skills. This is an issue underexplored within this specific context. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to fill this gap by exploring the Turkish EFL teachers' critical reading conceptualization and their perceived and actual practices to improve preparatory school students' critical reading skills.



3. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate how EFL teachers at tertiary level conceptualize critical reading and how they integrate critical reading into their teachings. More specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do Turkish EFL teachers at a state university preparatory school context conceptualize critical reading?
2. What do Turkish EFL teachers do in class to improve their students' critical reading skills?

3.1. Setting

This research was conducted at the preparatory school of a state university during the Fall and Spring semesters in 2018-19. The preparatory school is under the school of foreign languages and has been accepting students since 2014. The medium of instruction in this university is English in five programs, namely: molecular biology and genetics, political science and public administration, business administration, history, and English Language Teaching (ELT). The preparatory school is mandatory for the students of these English-medium programs. In addition, the preparatory school also accepts a limited number of students who are going to study at Turkish-medium programs in this university. At the time of the data collection, the preparatory school had 279 students in Fall 2018 and 385 students in Spring 2019, and 25 instructors. Except for 10 middle eastern students, most of those students were Turkish.

The purpose of the preparatory school is to improve students' language skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing so that they will be competent enough to use English both in daily and academic life. The program offers English courses at Elementary (A1), Pre-Intermediate (A2), Intermediate (B1) and Upper-Intermediate (B2) levels in both semesters which are designed according to Common European Framework (CEFR). The school offers courses in Fall and Spring semesters. There are four periods in an academic year, two in Spring and two in Fall semesters. The first of these periods in each semester lasts eight weeks while the second lasts seven weeks. In each period, students are offered two courses, namely: a main course and a reading-writing course. The main course aims to guide and support the students to improve their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in general according to CEFR. Reading-writing course, on the other hand, aims specifically to develop students' reading and writing skills. In these classes, "English File" and "Q Skills for Success: Reading and Writing" published by Oxford are used as coursebooks. English File's elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels are used in main course classes while Q Skills 1, 2, 3 and 4 are used for reading-writing classes throughout the academic year. In each period, students take 14 hours of the main course and six hours of reading-writing classes each week. The syllabus and pacing is determined by the Curriculum and Materials Development Office with the approval of the administration. By the end of each semester, the students will have been exposed to 300 hours of English in their courses.

3.2. Participants

The data for the open ended questionnaire was collected from 20 EFL teachers whereas the data for observation and interview was collected from three EFL teachers.

3.2.1. Participants for open ended questionnaire

The participants of the present study were 20 Turkish EFL teachers. Although at the time of data collection the preparatory school had 25 Turkish EFL teachers, five of them did not show consent to participate in the study. Hence, the study was conducted with 20 teachers who voluntarily showed consent to become participants. Demographic data of these EFL teachers revealed that their ages ranged between 27 and 45. Sixteen (80%) teachers were female and four (20 %) were male. Participants were teachers with Turkish L1 background having 5 to 25 years of teaching experience at university preparatory school context. Seventeen (85%) of them had more than five years of teaching experience at the current preparatory school.

Eighteen (90%) of these participants had a degree in ELT whereas two (10 %) had their undergraduate degrees in American Culture and Literature, and Translation and Interpreting. In addition, four (20%) participants had a Master's degree in ELT. Six (30%) of the participants were pursuing their M.A. studies on ELT while 6 (30%) others in various majors including Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language, Turkish Language and Literature, Curriculum and Instruction, Cultural Studies, and European Union and International Relations. Three (15%) of the participants were pursuing their Ph.D. studies on ELT and two (10%) on Curriculum and Instruction, and History of the Republic of Turkey. All of the participating EFL teachers had teaching

experience at elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper- intermediate levels at the university preparatory school.

3.2.2. Participants for observation and interview

Three of the 20 participants were selected for the observation and interview based on the answers they provided on the open ended questionnaire. Two of these teachers were female and one was male. All of the participating teachers were given numbers for the analysis purposes to maintain their identity confidential. Hence, among all teachers who responded to the questionnaire, participants 3, participant 10, and participant 14 were selected to be observed and interviewed.

Participant 3 was a 33 year old teacher who had her B.A. and M.A. degrees in ELT. She was continuing her Ph.D. studies on ELT at a state university. She had 11 years of teaching experience at different preparatory schools in Turkey. She had been teaching at the current institution for two years at the time of data collection. She had taught at elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels. She also had working experience at the curriculum and instruction office. During the study, she was teaching the main course to a class of 20 students for 10 hours a week and reading-writing courses to another group of 20 students for 8 hours a week.

The second participant, Participant 10, was 30 years old, and had a B.A. degree in ELT. Although he was enrolled in an M.A. program in ELT at a state university, due to his teaching workload and transportation difficulties, he had dropped out of the M.A. program. At the time of data collection, he had eight years of teaching experience, one and a half years of which in the preparatory school of the current university. Throughout the study, he was teaching the main course in one class with 20 students and reading and writing courses in another class with 20 students.

The third participant, Participant 14, was 27 years old and held a B.A. degree in ELT and she was continuing her M.A. studies at a state university in ELT at the time of the study. She had 5 years of teaching experience at different preparatory schools. At the time of data collection, she had been teaching at the current preparatory school for more than a year. She had teaching experience at elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate levels. During the study, she was teaching the main course in one class with 20 students and reading-writing courses in another class with 20 more students.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected through qualitative means following a three-stage process. Creswell (2008) states that the triangulation of the gathered data is a way to support it in a more meaningful and reasonable way to make the study valid. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, qualitative data was collected through an open ended questionnaire, observation and interview. First, an open ended questionnaire was prepared by the researcher and piloted with two teachers for its wording and clarity before it was administered to 20 participating teachers of the study. After the data was collected through the open ended questionnaire, the written data was analyzed. The EFL teachers were asked to give their answers in either Turkish or English. After analyzing the data for the open ended questionnaire, three EFL teachers were selected to be observed and interviewed in order to clarify what they had stated on the open ended questionnaire. Two of the EFL teachers who had made vague statements and one teacher who claimed to be using critical reading activities widely in her classes were selected for the observation and interview part of the study. During the observation of these three teachers by the researcher detailed notes were taken to

make a record of activities that were used in the class. As for the final phase of the research, interviews with three EFL teachers were scheduled at their earliest convenience. The interviews were conducted in their mother language, Turkish, so they could express their thoughts as much and comfortably as possible.

3.3.1. Open ended questionnaire

Questionnaires, open-ended and closed, are used widely to gather a considerable amount of data from the participants in qualitative studies (Mackey and Gass, 2005). The present study adopts an open ended questionnaire that gives the participants a chance to express their opinion upon the issue explored in the research.

The open ended questionnaire which was prepared for the purposes of this study included two parts involving a section that asks for participants' consent. The consent paragraph was to certify teachers' agreement to participate in the study. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of the questions to gather demographic information about the EFL teachers. These questions included the EFL teachers' gender, age, major, highest degree of qualifications, years of teaching experience as of graduation, and years of teaching experience at the current institution. The second part contained two open ended questions which aimed to identify the EFL teachers' conceptualization of critical reading and what they believe they are doing in class to develop the preparatory school students' critical reading skills. In other words, the questions were: 1. How do you define *critical reading* and what do you think it involves? and 2. What do you do in class to improve your preparatory school students' critical reading skills? (See the open ended questionnaire in Appendix A)

These questions were piloted with two ELT lecturers who had done research on critical reading and two ELT instructors who were working at the university. After

piloting the instrument and getting the approval of the ethical committee of the university, necessary permissions to conduct research within that setting was taken from the Director and Head of Foreign Languages Department of the School of Foreign Languages who were informed of the purpose and the possible contribution of the findings to their institution. Finally after taking the consent of the participating EFL teachers, the data collection procedure for the present study began. The questionnaires were sent to the EFL teachers via email and they were kindly asked to return at their earliest convenience. However, due to the busy schedules of the EFL teachers, it took approximately three months to gather all of the responses.

3.3.2. Observation

Following the analysis of the written data gathered through the open ended questionnaire, the participants for the observation were selected. The selection was done based on the information they provided in the questionnaire. The participants who gave short and unclear answers and the one with the most detailed answer on the open ended questionnaire were selected to be observed and interviewed later. Creswell (2008) distinguished different types of observation: complete participant, observer as participant, participant as observer, and complete observer. In this study, the researcher had the role of a complete observer. The teachers were observed in their reading-writing courses without any interaction. This type of observation allows researchers to discover the issues that the participants would not talk about. However, some participants might find it hard to adapt to the process of being observed and it might result in gathering limited data (Creswell, 2008).

The observation of three EFL teachers' reading-writing classes was done on the scheduled days to confirm what they had stated on the open-ended questionnaire.

Prior to the observation, teachers informed the researcher as to what is to be taught in class on that particular hour. (See the pre observation form in Appendix B) Each was observed for nine hours. Throughout the observation process, the researcher attended the classes and took notes regarding how the teachers were implementing activities, especially critical reading, in their classes. There were 20 students in each of the courses who were informed to attain activities as usual. After the observation, the researcher asked the observed teachers if they were able to integrate critical reading into your teaching, which activities they selected to improve students' critical reading, and the reasons for not being able to integrate critical reading into your teaching in case there was none observed. (See the post observation form in Appendix C)

3.3.3. Interview

According to Creswell (2008), the interviews can be done face-to-face/one on one, on telephone, as a focus group and through e-mail. In this study, the interviews were done face-to face/ one on one as it provides an opportunity for further interrogation based on the answers received. However, it is subject to the limitations that stem from the fact that answers reveal participants' perceptions and views that may not always match with what they actually do in class (Creswell, 2008).

The combination of the data gathered from questionnaire and the interview yield more fruitful data (Griffie, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of the interviews with the observed three EFL teachers was to let them elaborate further on their answers on the questionnaire and to understand the nature of the activities they implemented in their reading-writing classes. Interviews were done in 2019 Fall, alone with each participating teacher in a quiet room. Hence, three separate interviews were done in total in Turkish and recorded by the consent of the EFL teachers.

3.4. Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained through the open ended questionnaire and interviews was analyzed through content analysis. The purpose of content analysis is to examine the qualitative data systematically to determine the categories and themes (Drisko and Maschi, 2016; McKay, 2006). The participants' conceptualization of critical reading was analyzed through Facione's (2013) critical thinking model. Facione (1990) identified the skills included in critical thinking with a committee of 46 experts, who were educators and distinguished critical thinking experts, at a panel using the delphi method. The 46 participant experts were expected to come to an agreement on the components of critical thinking by considering the proposed questions and their possible answers, opinions, comments and objectives. In the end of the panel, the participants suggested the possible components of critical thinking and how it could be instructed, assessed and developed. Hence, throughout the discussions critical thinking were made "operational to the extent that important parts of critical thinking could be assessed validly and reliably" (Facione, 1990, p.7) As mentioned earlier, his widely accepted model presents core critical thinking skills, namely interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation, that are also acknowledged to be significant components of critical reading. These six core cognitive skills also posit the sub skills involved with clear definitions. Hence the data was analyzed to see if the participants' definitions involved any of these sub skills that could be categorized under the themes of six core skills .

Data was coded independently first by the researcher and then by a second coder for confirmatory purposes. While the subskills that formed participants'

conceptualization of critical reading were identified, data was also studied to see if there are other categories that could not be identified by the themes of the model.

Data gathered through the interviews and notes taken during the observations was also coded into themes and checked with a second coder.

In qualitative research, to assure rigor the term trustworthiness is used to address the quality of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) brought up a four-step criteria to determine trustworthiness of the qualitative studies: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. First of all, credibility is equal to the reliability of the findings. In this study credibility was achieved by means of the triangulation of questionnaire data through observation and interviews. Besides, a well-established model with clearly defined skills and subskills was used for the identification of teachers' conceptualization. Secondly, transferability indicates being able to transfer the study to other contexts with different participants. To provide transferability, detailed description of the study context and demographic features of the participants were provided. Thirdly, dependability refers to the stability of the findings. In order to fulfill dependability, data was collected through different means. Finally, confirmability involves being objective and dealing with the data in an unbiased way. Conformality was established through the analysis of data by two independent coders. A consensus was achieved on each category and theme.

4. RESULTS

This section provides the results of the analysis of qualitative data gathered through the open-ended questionnaire, observation of the classes of EFL teachers, and interviews with them.

4.1. Findings of the First Research Question

The analysis of the responses on the open-ended questionnaire revealed the answer to the first research question of the study, *How do Turkish EFL teachers at a state university preparatory school context conceptualize critical reading?* The responses given by 20 EFL teachers were initially analyzed considering the skills involved in Facione's (2013) critical thinking definition adopted as the theoretical framework of the study. As mentioned earlier, his definition of critical thinking involved six major skills, namely themes labeled as analysis, evaluation, explanation, inference, interpretation, and self-regulation, each of which was defined in detail with the sub skills involved. As these skills are also considered as the essential components of critical reading in literature, the detailed and thorough definition of what composes each by Facione, has been the reason for the selection of this framework as the initial coding scheme of the present study. However, the analysis revealed some categories that could not be identified by this framework. After multiple readings of these statements, new categories that define critical reading emerged as will be shown below.

The tables given in this section (Table 2-7) display the categories, namely the sub skills involved in each skill, which compose EFL teachers' conceptualization of

critical reading, the frequency of each identified in their statements, and the number and percentage of teachers who had those subskills in their conceptualizations. The categories that could not be identified by the definitions of Facione (2013), however, were shown on Table 8. The subskills in each table were put in order according to their frequency of occurrence in the data.

The analysis of data for the first research question revealed that EFL teachers who participated in the study defined critical reading mostly as the *interpretation* of the text. Table 2 shows how participants' conceptualization of interpretation matches with Facione's sub skills of interpretation.

Table 2

Interpretation in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To identify the author's purpose, theme and point of view	23	11 (55%)
To clarify meaning	9	8 (40%)
To comprehend significance	3	3 (15%)
To paraphrase or clarify what a chart or graph means	3	3 (15%)
TOTAL	38	15 (75%)

As Table 2 shows 11 (55%) of 20 EFL teachers have conceptualized critical reading as the interpretation of authors' purpose and point of view, eight (40%) as the clarification of meaning, three (15 %) as the comprehension of the significance of points raised in the text, and three (15%) as the interpretation of the information presented in the charts and graphs provided by the author. A total of 15 (75%) of the

participants, hence, defined critical reading by referring to the subskills necessary to interpret the meaning of a text 38 times. This finding suggests that teachers mostly perceive critical reading as interpretation. Among these subskills, interpretation of the authors' purpose of writing a particular text was verbalized the most, namely 23 times, by the participants of the study. To illustrate this, one of the participants stated "interpretation involves understanding the writers' perspective, tone, and attitude, and to understand the overall purpose of the passage" (T1). As stated by another participant, understanding an author's purpose of writing requires "...asking questions related to the author's point of view; what kind of a text it would be if the writer had written with a different purpose" (T2). It also requires interrogating "why the author is providing that piece of information" (T3) and "what the author wants the readers to take away" (T5). To illustrate the importance of interpreting the meaning and the significance of the point another teacher states that. (T10)

The analysis of data obtained through the questionnaire also revealed that 13 (65%) of 20 EFL teachers defined critical reading by the subskills of *analysis* as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Analysis in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To pick out the main claim	5	4 (20%)
To sketch the relationship of sentences or paragraphs to each other and to the main purpose of the passage	4	4 (20%)
To detect argument	2	2 (10%)
To analyze argument	2	2 (10%)
To identify unstated assumptions	1	1 (5%)
To identify similarities and differences	1	1 (5%)
To examine ideas	1	1 (5%)
TOTAL	17	13 (65%)

Thirteen (65%) of 20 EFL teachers defined critical reading by Facione's categories of analysis. These categories appeared 17 times in their accounts. As Table 3 shows, four (20%) of the participants defined critical reading as analyzing the text to pick the main ideas and gist, while four (20%) others defined it as understanding the relation between statements and paragraphs with regard to the main purpose of the text. For the latter, participants stated in their definitions that understanding the relation between the statement and paragraphs involves analyzing "why the writer has chosen a particular word over another" (T17), "...the characters or order of events" (T10), "the relationship among sentences or ideas to discover new information" (T13) and "the writer's way of choosing his/her language" (T5).

Table 3 also shows that while two (10%) participants define critical reading as detecting the different arguments made by the authors in the text, another two (10%) refer to the analysis of these arguments by "sorting out how a specific argument is

discussed and tried to be built within a text” (T8) and “evaluating the evidence” (T17) presented to support that argument. Critical readers also analyze the text to identify the unstated assumptions and to understand the similarities and differences between the viewpoints and arguments given in the text as suggested by one (5%) of the EFL teachers respectively. Hence, a total of 17 comments were identified in the data that could be listed by the sub skills required for analysis.

Table 4 shows the third most commonly identified theme in EFL teachers’ conceptualization of critical reading, namely *evaluation*. Ten (50%) of the participants have defined critical reading as the evaluation of the credibility of the statements uttered by the authors (45%), strengths and the weaknesses of interpretations made by the author (10%), relevance of the arguments provided within the text (10%), and logical strength of the statements (5%). Hence, data involves 19 comments that were listed by the subcategories of evaluation skill.

Table 4

Evaluation in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To assess the credibility of the statements	12	9 (45%)
To compare strengths and weaknesses of alternative interpretations	2	2 (10%)
To judge if an argument is relevant or applicable	2	2 (10%)
To assess the logical strength of the statements	1	1 (5%)
To judge if evidence supports the conclusion	2	1 (5%)
TOTAL	19	10 (50%)

Participants comment that evaluation requires “being skeptical” (T7) to make judgments regarding the value of information and arguments presented within the text. They believe that for that purpose students should be encouraged for constant fact-checking, to think about and write reflections on what they read in order to form their own point of views, and assess the text in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas presented. As one participant states “A critical reader might read the same work to appreciate how a particular perspective on the events and a particular selection of facts can lead to particular results” (T4).

The analysis of data reveals *inference* as the next skill required for critical reading stated 12 times by eight (40%) of the participants. Table 5 shows that these participants perceived critical reading as deducing the consequences (25%), and drawing conclusions (10%) based on the arguments presented within the text. One (5%) of the participants, however, defined critical reading as a skill that requires readers to make synthesis of the related ideas and query the evidence while another one (5%) sees it as constructing meaning from the elements in reading text.

Table 5

Inference in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To consider relevant information and to deduce the consequences from the data	7	5 (25%)
To draw conclusion	2	2 (10%)
Querying evidence	1	1 (5%)
To formulate synthesis of related ideas into a coherent perspective	1	1 (5%)
Implication of the position someone is advocating or drawing out or constructing meaning from the elements in reading	1	1 (5%)
TOTAL	12	8 (40%)

Hence, critical reading is “Making connections in your mind” by making a synthesis of all the ideas put forward by the text and drawing conclusions. As one of the teachers states in her response to the questionnaire, “Looking for the implications of the text serves for the critical reading skill” (T9). Another teacher states that critical reading is “Go(ing) further than just being satisfied with what a text says” (T2), and this requires reading “between the lines to have a deeper understanding of sociocultural, political and ideological themes in language use” (T19).

The next skill identified in teachers’ conceptualization of critical reading is the *explanation* which involves the statement of one’s reasoning in the form of cogent arguments and the justification of the explanations provided in terms of evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological and contextual considerations. The former was verbalized by three (15%) and the latter by two (10%) of the participants. In total,

four (20%) of the participants perceived explanation as required of critical reading (Table 6)

Table 6

Explanation in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To present one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments	3	3 (15%)
To justify reasoning	2	2 (10%)
TOTAL	5	4 (20%)

As one of the teachers suggested, explanation is done “to persuade the reader” (T4). Authors uses strategies to convince readers and a critical reader “agrees or disagrees with the scientific finding/claims in the articles” evaluating the explanations or justifications given by the authors (T10).

The final critical thinking skill identified in EFL teachers' conceptualizations of critical reading is *self-regulation* defined with the categories presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Self-Regulation in Critical Reading

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
To monitor how well you understand what you read or experience	3	3 (15%)
To examine your views on a controversial issue with sensitivity to the possible influences of your personal bias or self-interest	2	2 (10%)
To separate your own ideas from the author's	1	1 (5%)
To compare the writer's point of view with their own	1	1 (5%)
TOTAL	4	4 (20%)

The findings reveal the definitions of critical reading to monitor comprehension of the text by three (15%) of the participants, and examine one's views on a controversial issue considering the personal bias by two (10%) of the participants. According to one (5%) of the EFL teachers self-regulation involves the ability to separate one's ideas from those of authors and compare them. As stated by one participant, self-regulation enables "engaging in and responding to the text" (T3). These sub skills involved in self-regulation were found in the responses of four (20%) of the participants.

The analysis of data for the first question revealed some sub skills that could not be categorized by Facione's (2013) definition of critical thinking. Table 8 demonstrates that teachers' conceptualization of critical reading also involves providing a sound basis for judgment, differentiating fact from opinion, recognizing bias, and selective attention.

Table 8

Other Skills Identified in Teachers' Critical Reading Conceptualization

Subskills	F	Participant N (%)
Provide sound basis for judgment based on background knowledge	7	6 (30%)
Differentiate fact from opinion	3	6 (30%)
Recognizing bias	2	1 (5%)
Selective attention	1	1 (5%)
TOTAL	5	6 (30%)

In their definitions of critical reading, six (30%) of the teachers highlighted the important role of background knowledge and previous experiences in providing a sound basis for their judgments. In other words, they implied that critical readers do not only use their background knowledge to comprehend the text, but also refer to it for their judgments and evaluations of the texts. Other points raised include that “texts do not only provide facts, but they also contain opinions” (T4), and “authors can be biased towards an idea or something” (T2). Hence the 30% and 5% of the participants assert that critical reading involves the skills of differentiating the fact from the opinion and recognizing the bias of the authors, respectively. Lastly, according to one of the participants, critical reading is the ability to pay attention to specific parts of the text, depending on the purpose of reading and the type of information sought.

4.2. Findings of the Second Research Question

The answer for the second research question, *What do Turkish EFL teachers do in class to improve their students' critical reading?*, came from the data obtained through the second question of the open ended questionnaire, observations, and interviews with three EFL teachers. This section is divided into two parts. The first part presents what teachers say they do in class to improve the critical reading skills of their students within the framework of the categories that formed their conceptualization of critical reading as identified in the first research question. The second part presents the findings in relation to what teachers actually do in class based on the observation and interview data.

4.2.1. What teachers say they do to improve critical reading skills.

The participants of the study were asked what they do in class to improve the critical reading skills of their students in language classes at preparatory school. Analysis of teachers' responses revealed that teachers say they integrate activities into their teachings to improve the interpretation, analysis, inference, explanation, evaluation, and self-regulation skills of their students to some extent as tabulated in Table 9.

Table 9

Activities Teachers do to Improve Critical Reading Skills

Skill	Activities	Participant N (%)
Interpretation	Identifying the author's purpose and point of view	6 (30%)
	Clarifying meaning	3 (10%)
	Reading charts and graphs	2 (15%)
	Paraphrasing	1 (5%)
TOTAL		9 (45%)
Analysis	Finding the main claim	4 (20%)
	Detecting argument	2 (10%)
	Finding the relation between the sentences or paragraphs in relation to the purpose of the text	1 (5%)
	Identifying unstated assumptions	1 (5%)
TOTAL		8 (40%)
Inference	Deducing the consequences	5 (25%)
	Drawing conclusion	1 (5%)
TOTAL		6 (30%)
Explanation	Presenting one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments.	3 (15%)
	Stating and justifying reasoning in terms of evidential and conceptual consideration.	1 (5%)
TOTAL		4 (20%)
Evaluation	Assessing the credibility of the statements	3 (15%)
	Judging evidence	1 (5%)
	Judging if an argument is applicable for the situation	1 (5%)
TOTAL		4 (20%)
Self-Regulation	Comparing the writer's point of view with their own	1 (5%)
TOTAL		1 (5%)
Other Skills	Recognizing bias	1 (5%)
TOTAL		1(5%)

As shown in the table, nine (45%) of 20 teachers aim to improve their students' interpretation skills mainly through the activities which require them to identify the authors' purpose of writing that particular text as stated by six (30%) of these nine participants. A few teachers also employ activities to clarify the meaning (N=3), read the charts (N=2), and paraphrase the statements (N=1) for the same purpose. Other types of activities mostly stated by eight (40%) of the participants fall into the analysis category. In other words, these teachers state that they often ask their students to find the main claim (N=4) and arguments (N=2) within the text, analyze the relation between the sentences and paragraphs (N=1), and identify the unstated assumptions (N=1) in the text. Although these two main critical reading skills of interpretation and analysis have been the most verbalized of all as shown in Tables 2 and 3 before, the number of teachers given in Table 9 clearly reveals that the majority of teachers do not integrate interpretation and analysis activities into their classes. In other words, although 75% (Table 2) and 65% (Table 3) of teachers conceptualize interpretation and analysis as the main skills involved in critical reading, only 45% and 40% of teachers (Table 9) say they interpret and analyze activities in class respectively.

Table 9 also shows that six (30%) of 20 teachers aim to develop inference making skills of their students mostly through the activities that require them to deduce the consequences of events and arguments provided within the text. This inference making activity stated by five (25%), is in fact the second most frequently stated activity by the participants of the study. The other numbers and percentages on Table 9 reveal that only four (20%) of teachers say they do explanation and evaluation activities while only one (5%) integrates self-regulation and recognizing bias activities.

4.2.2. The results of the observations

In order to understand the data coming from the open-ended questionnaire and discover how EFL teachers integrate critical reading into their classes, three out of 20 EFL teachers were observed for nine hours in their reading – writing classes at preparatory school. The number of the students in each class that was observed were 20 students. The findings of the observation of the three EFL teachers are analyzed one by one. Moreover, data coming from the pre and post observation questions are also included.

4.2.2.1. Findings of the observation of participant 14.

During nine-hour in class teaching, the first participant was observed to have integrated analysis activities that involve graphically organizing an essay, finding the main claim, understanding the relations between the sentences and examining ideas raised in the text. To illustrate, regarding graphically organizing an essay, it was observed that she explained how to write an essay on the board by highlighting what the students are required to write in each part of the essay. She displayed this information on a chart on the board. She also asked for the main idea and the supporting details of the reading texts from the students. Furthermore, she wanted the students to explain how the supporting details were exemplified. To examine how sentences are related to each other in relation to the main theme of the text, the teacher guided students with her questions. With regard to examining ideas, she asked the question like “Do we want the best athlete to win or the athlete with the best equipment to win?”. The purpose of this question was to make the students consider, within the context of that particular reading text, if it was fair to be equipped with the latest technology equipment.

Participant 14's lessons included activities for explanation, mainly through designing a graphic display and presenting full and well-reasoned arguments. To design a graphic display, she used a mind map to direct the students to organize their thoughts on a chart. Mind map is a way to organize and visualize your thoughts on a chart or graph. She indicated in the interview that she prefers preparing mind maps for most of her classes because mind mapping encourages brainstorming and helps students organize their thoughts through visualization. She was also observed to ask students to develop their own arguments related to the theme of the text, for instance on cheating, while exploring the well-reasoned arguments within the text. She wanted the students to explain and present their opinions with logical information.

Participant 14's lesson contained an activity on evaluation with a focus on reflecting upon the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas, or the comparison of ideas in terms of similarities and differences. For instance, she asked them to compare American culture and Turkish culture. Moreover, she wanted the students to pinpoint different points by giving examples.

She also did some interpretation activities to clarify the meaning in the text and to interpret the information given on charts and graphs. She continuously tried to explain to the students what they were supposed to do for each of the tasks in the class and provided clarification, for instance by pausing the audio in between the paragraphs to make sure everyone was following and understanding the text. She also emphasized the fact that graphic interpretation was an important skill that the students should acquire.

Participant 14's teaching involved inferencing activities like prediction of what will happen next and formulating synthesis. For instance she asked a question like

“What kind of topic do you think the travelers will ask about?” while reading the text to make the students predict how the text might continue. Besides, she wanted the students to express their beliefs about a topic by combining the new information that they learned from the texts with what they already know.

She also asked students to examine their view on a controversial issue and revise their answers to promote self-regulation. In other words, she wanted the students to express their opinions on the subjects they read about and to discuss the matters as a group. During the group discussions she monitored the students and got involved with each of the groups. In writing activities, she wanted her students to revise their answers in view of the feedback she gave them..

In terms of self-regulation, this teacher first believes that reading is not a one way but a two way interaction. Second, she states that after reading the text there should be a change in the reader’s behavior or feeling. She highlights the fact that readers should be affected from the reading in some way. Third, she pinpoints that teachers should ask what the students think about the points and issues raised in the text so the students get a chance to think about the text thoroughly. Besides, she also believes that the students should also be directed to reveal what they would have done if they were in the shoes of those characters in the texts. Next, the EFL teacher emphasizes that the students should be asked questions before and after reading to see if their thoughts upon the issue change. Finally, she highlights that a critical reader should gather all the information first and write by synthesizing.

Hence the observation of this participant revealed that the teacher integrated critical reading into her lessons targeting some of the sub skills necessary for analysis, explanation, evaluation ,interpretation, inference and self-regulation.

4.2.2.2. Findings of the observation of participant 10.

Participant 10's teaching included the identification of the main idea in a text, which is a sub skill of analysis. He wanted the students to identify the main idea and claim by showing the evidence for their answers. His lesson contained three sub skills of explanation: stating research results, presenting reasoning, and presenting full and well-reasoned arguments. That is to say, he wanted his students to express their beliefs about a subject by the contribution of scientific data, by supporting their opinions with examples based on real life experiences, and by making use of logical information to persuade people.

Participant 10's lessons involved three subskills of evaluation, namely in terms of strengths and weaknesses, author's credibility, and the assessment of logical strength. To illustrate the former, he wanted the students to explain how the concept of politeness could change from one society to another or compare the robots and people in terms of what they can and cannot do. To evaluate the author's credibility, he asked if they were convinced by the writer's explanations. He wanted to know to what extent the students were optimistic and pessimistic about the common use of robots in a variety of contexts with specific examples.

To improve students' interpretation skill, the teacher pinpointed that the students should understand the writer's purpose for writing the particular text and point of view, and that the readers should read to understand the ideas in the text. Participant 10's lesson was observed to include five interpretation activities: Decoding significance, paraphrasing, clarifying meaning, and identifying author's purpose and point of view, and interpreting the information given in charts and graphs. To illustrate finding the author's purpose and point of view, for instance, he

frequently asked questions like “When you read the article, how did you feel about the tone of the writer?”, “How do you understand the purpose of the writer?”, “What is the purpose of the text?”, and “Why is the writer so excited and hopeful?”. Also to clarify what a sign, chart or graph means, he wanted the students to examine the pictures and graphs presented in the reading text to assess how they are connected with the information provided within the text.

Participant 10’s teaching also did some inferencing activities that include drawing conclusions, predicting what will happen next, and finding alternatives and forming hypotheses. For instance, he asked questions like “What might happen if we cheat?” to make the students consider the consequences of certain behaviors. and draw conclusions. .

As for the self-regulation, he encourages the students to examine their own beliefs about the given information. The students question themselves to see if they agree or disagree with the author and present justifications for their thoughts. His teaching included two sub skills required for self-regulation, monitoring how well one understands what is experienced and checking oneself. Regarding the former, it was observed that he made a comment like “When you watch a sport like boxing you do not know, you do not understand it. However, when you try to learn how to box yourself, you can understand it”. To check oneself, he asked questions like “How do you feel about what you read?” and “How do you understand what the characters in the text feel?”

Participant 10’s lesson involved skepticism as well. It was observed that he constantly warned his students to question the information given in the texts. In other words, he told them not to accept everything written in the texts.

4.2.2.3. Findings of the observation of participant 3.

Participant 3 was observed to integrate three subskills of analysis into her lessons: examining ideas, picking out the main claim, and identifying unstated assumptions. To illustrate examining ideas, participant 3 asked questions like “What precautions do you take to protect yourself from catching a cold and are there any illnesses that you want to learn about?”, “Do you think it’s okay to talk too much in the job interview or ask for the work hours of the office that you apply to work at?”. To have the students find the main claim, she asked questions like “Why do you think that sometimes illness is good for our body? What is the main thing that makes you think like this?” In relation to identifying unstated assumptions, she made a comment such as “You can ask indirect questions about the job that you are applying for in the job interview. It would be more appropriate and this way you can learn more about the job.” She also asked students to assess the credibility of the statements to improve their evaluation skills considering the details were given in the text.

Her teaching also involved one sub skill of explanation, namely presenting one’s reasoning in the form of cogent arguments. She asked a question like “Do you think it’s appropriate to ask about the salary of the job you are applying for?” to make the students present their opinions.

She also emphasized the importance of interpretation by distinguishing the main idea from the subordinate ideas. She often asked the students to tell the difference between a main idea and supporting details by telling their opinions about the main and other supporting ideas in the text.

As for inferencing, the observed teacher expected her students to synthesize the ideas they picked from the text with what they already know. Her lesson revealed four

sub skills of inference making including drawing deductions based on relevant information, formulating synthesis, predicting what will happen next, and developing a set of options to address a problem. To illustrate formulating synthesis, she explained how students can refer to their background knowledge to infer. She said that when the students go to their departments, they will need to use that skill, synthesis, to come up with a strong and a grounded idea. With reference to predicting what will happen next, she asked a question like “Can you guess what the reading text could be about?” to make the students presume the components of the text. In consideration of developing a set of options to address a problem, she asked a question like “Let’s imagine one of our friends is going to have a job interview. What would you suggest? What should s/he do to get prepared for the interview?” to make the students consider different alternatives.

Participant 3 also encouraged her students to revise their answers in view of the errors, as part of self-regulation. Overall, in her lesson she asked questions to foster analysis, explanation, interpretation, inference, and self-regulation to some extent.

4.2.3. The results of the interviews

Before the observations these teachers were asked what they would teach during that lesson and how they got prepared for it. The answers revealed that EFL teachers all had to follow the syllabus to teach the given subjects. They did not have much opportunity to integrate anything else into the lessons because of the tight schedule they all had to follow so that all of the preparatory school students would be taught the same things. As for getting prepared for the lessons, they all pinpointed that they read the subjects presented in the book and prepared extra thought-provoking questions. Furthermore, the EFL teachers implied that they want the students to

comment about the subjects in the book so that they can present their own ideas upon the issues. They wanted the reading materials to contribute to the students' general world knowledge, and wanted their students to be able to synthesize what they learned reading the text and their background knowledge. They all believe that this is an excellent way for the students to improve their writing skills as well.

During the post observation interviews, Participant 3 stated that in order to improve students' interpretation skills she asks a lot of questions encouraging them to think if they agree or disagree with the author's point of view. To improve their self-regulation skills, she checks the students' answers for the reading tasks, creates a writing task following a reading text, and asks the students or their peers to check their writings. She indicates that this is a great way to increase students' awareness of their mistakes. She also states the importance of considering the interpretation of the input gleaned from the reading texts. As the students read the text, they think about their own interpretations to be able to draw conclusions, monitor how well they understand, and evaluate the given information and the examples in terms of whether or not they are enough to make sense of the reading. Participant 3 also indicated that examining one's views, and personal reflection as they read the text should also be encouraged.

During the interview, as a sub skill of analysis, participant 10 stated that the students should be able to identify unstated assumptions and understand why the writer refers to some points. In other words, the readers should be able to predict the possible underlying reasons by reading the stated information. As for explanation, the EFL teacher indicates that the students should be able to state and justify their reasoning and be aware of the points stated in the text to predict the possible reasons

of the incidents within the texts. As for an interplay between the author and the reader, participant 10 highlights the point that the readers should try to pinpoint the connections between the text and their lives. Moreover, he implies that the readers should be expected to express their own views, asked to write reflection papers to represent their beliefs, and understand what message the writers intended to convey, how they felt and what they believed.

Participant 10's class covered cultural awareness. It was detected that he referred to the fact that every culture had different traditions and each of them had different values. Moreover, he stated that one certain behavior could be regarded worthy in one culture but not in another. Therefore, he emphasized that we should be familiar with different cultures and we should all respect their values.

Overall, it can be seen that he pinpoints the significance of analysis and explanation. Moreover, he emphasizes the interplay between the author and the reader; and the cultural aspect.

Participant 14 indicated that analysis is a higher level skill necessary for critical reading. She emphasized that she tries to make the students become aware of the similar and different points that were stated within the texts they read throughout the semester through a mind map. Mind maps help the learners visualize their thoughts on graphs. She believes that a mind map can help the students brainstorm about the given information by visualizing their thoughts. She highlights that the texts are related to one another in some way and students should become aware of that. The same teacher also pointed out that the students should be able to evaluate the reading passage by assessing the credibility of the statements. She expects the students to compare and

contrast the given information and to recognize the strengths and the weaknesses of the reading text.

To illustrate interpretation, participant 14 mentioned that the students should be able to say that they learned something new after reading the passage. The EFL teacher believes that each text has distinctive features within itself because of the fact that each writer has a different tone and purpose, which determines the words they select to express their thoughts.

This participant also believes that reading is not a one way interaction instead it is a two way interaction. After reading the text there should be a change in the reader's behavior or feeling. They should be directed to reveal what they would do if they were in the shoes of the characters of the texts, and consider if they could integrate the given information into their lives. These thoughts have relevance for self-regulation as a critical reading subskill. The students should be asked questions before and after reading to reveal if their thoughts upon the issue that was stated in the text change. She suggests that this way we can find the degree to which the students are influenced by the texts. Hence, the interview with this participant reveals that she emphasizes the importance of analysis, evaluation, interpretation and self-regulation to improve critical reading skills of the students.

After the observations participants were asked if they were able to integrate critical reading into your teaching. The EFL teachers again emphasized that they tried to integrate some critical reading skills into their classes so that the students would question the information to eventually become critical readers. The book that they used in the reading-writing classes also integrated critical reading skills. When they were specifically asked which activities were done to improve critical reading,

Participant 14 stated that she used a mind map to guide the students to graphically organize their thoughts, asked for the main and supporting ideas, and drew their attention to how the sentences were connected to one another. She also wanted the students to justify their responses to the reading text, to comment on the reading texts, and revise their writing according to the feedback she gave them.

Participant 10 indicated that he wanted the students to recognize the main idea of the reading texts, to gather scientific information to present their opinions, to benefit from their real life experiences in a reasonable way to give examples, to predict what the text would be about by reading the topic, to paraphrase some parts of the reading to be able to express what they understood in their own words, and to be skeptical about the reading text and question whatever they read. He also wanted his students to be aware of different cultures and respect them.

Participant 3 stated that she values the importance of teaching critical reading through prompt questions. She wanted her students to be able to understand the implied meaning, to be able to recognize the main idea and the subordinating ideas of the reading texts, and to relate what they read to their background knowledge. She also said she gave feedback to the students and asked them to revise their writings accordingly

When teachers were asked about the factors that prevent them from integrating critical reading into their teaching as much as they want, they highlighted the institutional expectations about covering what is in the syllabus. They said they do not have the liberty to make changes in the syllabus because the expectation was for all preparatory school students to cover the issues in the syllabus as stated. Besides, due

to time limitations, it could be difficult to find time for extra materials in all of the classes.



5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This section presents the discussion of the findings of the current study. The results are discussed within the framework of the related literature and elaborated on to make recommendations for pre-service teachers, in- service teachers, and future researchers.

5.1. Discussion

Critical reading has been a matter of research in the education setting; however, not many of the studies have focused specifically on Turkish EFL teachers in language preparatory school context at tertiary level. Critical reading involves significant skills necessary for the survival of the students at higher education. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate how EFL teachers conceptualize and teach critical reading skills to their students within this specific context with the participation of 20 preparatory school teachers at a state university. Data was collected through an open ended questionnaire from 20 teachers, and observation of and interview with 3 of these teachers. The conclusion of the study for the first research question “*How do Turkish EFL teachers at a state university preparatory school context conceptualize critical reading?*” indicate that the participating EFL teachers conceptualize critical reading predominantly as a skill which involves the subskills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference. However, according to the second research question, which is “*What do Turkish EFL teachers do in class to improve their students’ critical reading skills?*”, it can be concluded that the EFL teachers do not integrate critical reading into their classes to the same degree as they

conceptualize it. Interestingly, although the third fourth of all participating teachers see interpretation as a significant component of critical reading in their conceptualizations, when it comes to implementing activities that improve students' interpretive skills, fewer than half of them admit that they integrated them into their lessons. Similarly, the second most verbalized critical reading sub skill of analysis conceptualized by 13 (65%) of the EFL teachers has actually been targeted by eight (40%) of them, while the sub skill of evaluation that is perceived to be important by half of all participants, has been taught in class only by four (20%) of the teachers. These findings suggest that even though the participating teachers know what sub skills are actually required for critical reading or what it takes to be critical readers, they do not seem to take time to use activities specifically intended for the development of these skills. These findings can be explained by the fact that teachers in this setting already have tight schedules and curriculum to catch up with in limited time in line with the expectations of their institution, as stated by the participants interviewed. Teachers may also lack the professional knowledge of how to integrate these skills into their lessons with the most appropriate and effective techniques.

The results also revealed that some teachers' goal is to improve their students' inference making skills to be able to make conclusions from different actions and discussions. The inference making skill is a fundamental skill for university students and it needs to be improved for the academic success of these students in their fields of study. Teachers seem to be using questioning quite often in their classes to this end. In other words, they seem to be guiding their students with prompt questions on the issues raised in their texts and hence, they intend to develop a questioning mind-set on the part of the students.

The comparison between the results obtained from the open ended questionnaire and the observation of the EFL teachers revealed the fact that EFL teachers may be using certain critical reading subskills that they did not mention on the open ended questionnaire and the interviews. One of these teachers indicated during the interview that he wants his students to become aware of the importance of including research related data, and even if he did not report to be using inference-making activities, he was observed to have used activities like predicting what will happen next and finding alternatives and forming hypotheses. Another teacher, unlike what she reported, integrated activities that foster evaluation through making comparison and contrast among the information stated in the reading text, and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the reading text.

The EFL teachers' definition of critical reading shows some consistency with Facione's (2013) definitions of critical thinking skills. The findings of the study were also consistent with those of other studies (Akbaş, 2017; Bosley, 2008; Wilson, 2015; Yuan et al., 2022). The participating EFL teachers defined critical reading through constructs such as detecting main ideas, making analysis, making inferences, making evaluation and questioning. However, some of the findings of the current study did not concur with those of Latif (2022) and Yuan et al. (2022) studies in that their participants considered critical reading and thinking to be a purpose of literature classes, not language learning classes. Besides, they claimed that it was not possible to include critical reading and thinking skills into their classes due to workload, difficulty in the management of the class, assessment system and low English level of the students. Although the reasons they provided were similar to those uttered by the participants interviewed in the present study, our participants revealed those as excuses for not being able to integrate those activities into their classes as much as

they desire, not because they believed critical reading is not an aim of language classes.

5.2. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the results of the present study, some valuable implications can be made concerning EFL teachers' conceptualization of critical reading. The results indicated that the EFL teachers are familiar with different components of critical reading skills and are aware of the importance of their inclusion into their lesson. However, they integrate those critical reading skills into their teachings in a very limited way. Despite a few excuses uttered like having no time for extra activities or the necessity for following the syllabus strictly, the reasons may be various and need to be explored in more depth. To introduce critical reading to the students thoroughly, first of all teachers should not feel that they have to follow the syllabus strictly. In addition, the hours of the preparatory school classes should be increased and more materials that can encourage the students to become critical readers should be prepared by the materials development office. It would be of great importance to design courses that will specifically teach critical reading skills to university level students so they can meet the requirements of academic reading and studies in their own programs.

Besides, in order to support the EFL teachers to be more competent themselves in critical reading, in-service teacher training programs should be delivered regularly to enhance their own critical reading skills as well as their pedagogical knowledge of how to teach these skills to their students. Teachers may be in need of learning what activities and tasks better equip their students with 21st century skills, a significant one of which is critical reading. With all the changing needs of society and learners,

what teachers should bring to class to better educate students need to be well- thought. Critical reading courses and activities should also be included in the initial teacher education of the pre-service teachers in the first place. The critical reading courses should not only be in ELT departments, but in all of the education faculties to promote critical reading skills of all the pre-service teachers.

5.3. Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

The current study has some limitations. First of all, the participants of the study for the open ended questionnaire were 20 Turkish EFL teachers at a preparatory school of a state university in Turkey. Even though the results reveal what teachers do to develop the critical reading skills of their students, the results of the study can be generalized by no means to all preparatory school teachers in similar contexts. The results could have been different if it were conducted with teachers at other state and foundation universities both in Istanbul and in other parts of Turkey.

Another limitation for the current study is the number of the EFL teachers who were interviewed and observed. Out of 20 participating Turkish EFL teachers, only three of them were observed and interviewed because of the difficulty in scheduling the time that would be suitable both for the researcher and the participating EFL teachers. Future studies can consider observing more teachers for a longer period of time. Besides, administrators and students' perspectives can also be investigated in these studies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Open Ended Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant Teacher,

This questionnaire has been written for my M.A thesis to find out the EFL teachers' critical reading conceptualization and how they integrate critical reading into their teachings. All information provided will be confidential and anonymous. I kindly ask you to fill in the questionnaire. I sincerely thank you for your time and valuable contribution.

I voluntarily agree to participate to the study.	Signature:
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Part A. Demographic Part

Dear EFL Teachers,

Please answer the questions about yourself carefully. Your answers will only be used for this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Gender: Female () Male ()

2. Age:

22-25 25-30 30-35 35-40 40 and higher

3. What is your major? _____

4. Do you have a pedagogical formation?

Yes _____ No _____

5. Do you have an MA degree?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what is your area of study? _____

6. Do you have a PHD degree?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what is your area of study? _____

7. How long have you been working as an instructor?

_____ years

8. Experience at the current institution:

_____ years

Part B. Open Ended Questionnaire

Dear EFL Teachers,

Please answer the questions below sincerely. The answers will only be used for this study. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. How do you define *critical reading* and what do you think it involves?



2. What do you do in class to improve your preparatory school students' critical reading skills?

Appendix B. Pre- Observation Form

Name of the EFL Teacher:

Date of Lesson

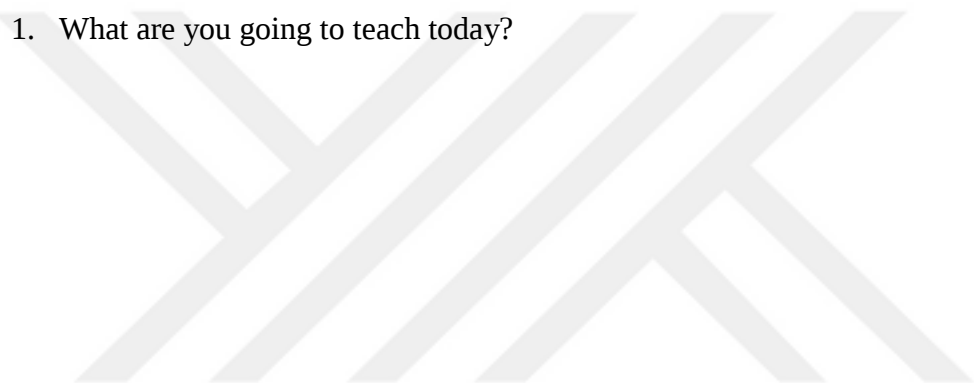
Observer:

Level:

Book:

Pre-Observation Questions:

1. What are you going to teach today?



2. What did you do to get prepared for this lesson?

Appendix C Post Observation Form

1. Were you able to integrate critical reading into your teaching?

2. Which activities were done to improve critical reading ?

3. What could be the possible reasons for not being able to integrate critical reading into your teaching?