

ABSTRACT

Mesi Afis. (2026). *The Correlation Between EFL Students' Metacognitive Awareness and Their Critical Reading Skills: A Study at Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University.*

Critical reading is essential for university EFL students because academic texts require more than literal comprehension; students must analyze arguments, evaluate evidence, recognize underlying assumptions, and assess the quality of reasoning. Metacognitive awareness may support these processes by helping readers plan, monitor, regulate, and evaluate their reading. Therefore, this study aimed to determine EFL students' metacognitive awareness scores, identify their critical reading skills scores, and examine the correlation between the two variables among fourth-semester students at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

This quantitative correlational study involved 40 fourth-semester students from Classes C, D, and E, selected through random sampling. Metacognitive awareness was measured using the 30-item *Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory* (MARSİ), developed by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002). The instrument represents Global Reading Strategies, Problem-Solving Strategies, and Support Reading Strategies. Critical reading skills were assessed using a researcher-developed 30-item multiple-choice test covering eight critical reading indicators. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, an additional Kolmogorov–Smirnov test of the unstandardized residuals, and Spearman's rank-order correlation. A one-tailed test at the .05 significance level was applied because the research hypothesis predicted a positive correlation.

The findings showed that the participants' MARSİ scores ranged from 78 to 137, with a mean of 103.68, a standard deviation of 14.46, and an average item score of 3.46. Their critical reading scores ranged from 20.00 to 96.67, with a mean of 80.75 and a standard deviation of 19.46, equivalent to approximately 24 correct answers out of 30 items on average. The Shapiro–Wilk test showed that the MARSİ scores were normally distributed ($p = .239$), whereas the critical reading scores were not normally distributed ($p < .001$). The unstandardized residuals also deviated from normality ($p < .001$). Therefore, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used. The positive correlation coefficient indicated that students with higher metacognitive awareness scores tended to obtain higher critical reading scores. The relationship was statistically significant ($r_s = .308, p = .026$, one-tailed), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and support for the alternative hypothesis. However, the magnitude of the correlation was weak, indicating limited correspondence between the two variables. This weak relationship may reflect the difference between self-reported strategic awareness and performance-based critical reading, as well as the possible influence of unmeasured linguistic, cognitive, academic, and task-related factors. Thus, metacognitive awareness was positively associated with critical reading skills, but the finding should be interpreted as an association rather than a causal effect.

Keywords: critical reading skills, EFL students, metacognitive awareness, reading strategies, correlational study.